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A Reference Grammar of

Modern Standard Arabic

Karin C. Ryding

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A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic is a comprehensive handbook on the structure of Arabic. Keeping technical terminology to a minimum, it provides a detailed yet accessible overview of Modern Standard Arabic in which the essential aspects of its phonology, morphology, and syntax can be readily looked up and understood. Accompanied by extensive carefully chosen examples, it will prove invaluable as a practical guide for supporting students' textbooks, classroom work, or self-study and will also be a useful resource for scholars and professionals wishing to develop an understanding of the key features of the language. Grammar notes are numbered for ease of reference, and a section on how to use an Arabic dictionary is included, as well as helpful glossaries of Arabic and English linguistic terms and a useful bibliography. Clearly structured and systematically organized, this book is set to become the standard guide to the grammar of contemporary Arabic.

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Georgetown University



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I am especially indebted to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman, who generously endowed the position I occupy at Georgetown University, and whose patronage of study and research about Arabic language, literature, and culture is well known and widely respected. It is for this reason that I dedicate this book, with profound gratitude, to His Majesty.

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Preface

This basic reference grammar is intended as a handbook for the general learner – a step on the way toward greater understanding of the Arabic language. Many excellent and effective textbooks for teaching Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) exist, as well as published research on a range of topics in Arabic linguistics (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, variation theory), but information in English on MSA grammatical topics tends to be scattered, and if a complete answer to a question regarding contemporary usage is needed, sometimes a number of sources need to be consulted.

The idea behind this reference grammar is to gather together in one work the essentials of MSA in such a way that fundamental elements of structure can be readily looked up and illustrated. It is intended primarily for learners of MSA as a practical guide for supporting their textbook lessons, classroom work, or self-study. This book is not intended in any way to supplant the exhaustive and profound analyses of classical and literary Arabic such as those by Wright (1896, reprint 1967) and Cantarino (1974–76). Those monumental books stand on their own and are irreplaceable reference works. This book is a work of considerably more modest goals and proportions.

1 Goals

This book is not designed to cover the entire field of literary or classical Arabic grammar. A comprehensive accounting of Arabic grammar is an undertaking of great complexity and depth, of competing indigenous paradigms (Basran and Kufan), of several dimensions (diachronic, synchronic, comparative), and of theoretical investigation across the spectrum of contemporary linguistic fields (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis).

The Arabic language is a vast treasure-house of linguistic and literary resources that extend back into the first millennium. Its grammatical tradition is over a thousand years old and contains resources of extraordinary depth and sophistication. Works in English such as Lane's dictionary (1863, reprint 1984), Wehr's dictionary (fourth edition, 1979), Wright's grammar (1896, reprint 1967), and

Howell's grammar (reprint 1986) are seminal contributions in English to understanding the wealth of the Arabic linguistic tradition. Yet, for the neophyte, for the average learner, or for the non-specialized linguist, easily usable reference works are still needed. This is, therefore, not a comprehensive reference grammar covering the full range of grammatical structures in both Classical and Modern Standard Arabic; rather, it centers on the essentials of modern written Arabic likely to be encountered in contemporary Arabic expository prose.

2 Methodology

The choices of explanations, examples, and layouts of paradigms in this book are pragmatically motivated rather than theoretically motivated and are not intended to reflect a particular grammatical or theoretical approach. I have been eclectic in providing descriptions of Arabic language features and structures, always with the intent of providing the most efficient access to Arabic forms and structures for English speakers. For example, I have assigned numbers to noun declensions for ease of reference. Also, I refer throughout the text to "past tense" and "present tense" verbs rather than "perfect" tense and "imperfect" tense verbs, although this has not been standard practice for Arabic textbooks or grammars.¹ I refer to the "locative adverbs" (*Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan*) as "semi-prepositions" (following Kouloughli 1994) because it captures their similarities to prepositions.²

Many Arabic terms and classifications, however, such as the "sisters of 'inna" and the "sisters of *kaan-a*" are highly useful and pragmatic ways of organizing and presenting morphological and syntactic information, even to nonnative speakers of Arabic, so they have been retained. I have endeavored to provide both English and Arabic technical terms for categorized phenomena.

There are those, both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, who will no doubt disagree with the mode of presentation and grammatical descriptions used in this book. However, since this text is aimed at learners and interested laypeople as well as linguists, I hope that the categories devised and the descriptions and examples provided will be useful, readable, and readily understandable. Transliteration is provided for all examples so that readers who do not have a grasp of Arabic script may have access to phonological structure.

3 The database

This reference grammar is based on contemporary expository prose, chiefly but not exclusively from Arabic newspapers and magazines, as the main resource for

¹ See the rationale for this choice in Chapter 21 on verb inflection, section 1.2.2.

² *Grammaire de l'arabe d'aujourd'hui*, D. E. Kouloughli refers to *Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan* as "quasi-prépositions." (152).

topics and examples of current everyday Arabic writing practice. The grammatical description that emerges therefore calibrates closely with contemporary written usage. Media Arabic was chosen as a main source of data for this text because of its contemporaneity, its coverage of many different topics, and the extemporary nature of daily reporting and editing. As a primary source of information about and from the Arab world, newspaper and magazine language reflects Arab editorial and public opinion and topics of current interest.³ Various subject matter and texts were covered, ranging from interviews, book reviews, feature stories, religion and culture, and sports reports, to straight news reports and editorials. In addition to newspapers, other sources used for data collection included contemporary novels and nonfiction. This is therefore strictly a descriptive grammar that seeks to describe MSA as it is within the parameters noted above, and not to evaluate it or compare it with earlier or more elegant and elaborate forms of the written language.

There are doubtless those who would assert that the ordinariness of media language causes it to lack the beauty and expressiveness of literary Arabic, and therefore that it is unrepresentative of the great cultural and literary achievements of the Arabs.⁴ To those I would reply that the very ordinariness of this type of language is what makes it valuable to learners because it represents a widely used and understood standard of written expression. As Owens and Bani-Yasin (1987, 736) note, “the average Arab is probably more exposed to this style than to most others, such as academic or literary writing.” In fact, it is a vital and emergent form of written language, being created and recreated on a daily basis, covering issues from the mundane to the extraordinary. With limited time to prepare its presentation style, media Arabic reflects more closely than other forms of the written language the strategies and structures of spontaneous expression.⁵

Media Arabic is straightforward enough in its content and style to form the basis for advanced levels of proficiency and comprehension, to expand vocabulary, to create confidence in understanding a wide range of topics, and particu-

³ Media discourse is described by Bell and Garrett (1998, 3) as “a rich resource of readily accessible data for research and teaching” and its usage “influences and represents people’s use of and attitudes towards language in a speech community.” They also state that “the media reflect and influence the formation and expression of culture, politics and social life” (1998, 4).

⁴ Cantarino, for example, in the introduction to his major work, *The Syntax of Modern Arabic Prose*, vol. I, states that in compiling his illustrative materials, he consulted a variety of literary sources, but “Newspapers have generally been disregarded, since Arabic journalism – like most news writing around the world – does not necessarily offer the best or most representative standard of literary language” (1974, 1:x).

⁵ The discipline of “media discourse research” or “media discourse analysis” is a rapidly growing one in linguistics. See Cotter 2001 for an overview of developments in this field. See also the cogent discussion of Arabic newspapers and the teaching of MSA in Taha 1995, and Mehall 1999.

larly to provide clear reference points for issues of structural accuracy.⁶ As Widdowson has stated, students whose future contexts of use are broad and not clearly predictable need fundamental exposure to “a language of wider communication, a language of maximal generality or projection value” (1988, 7). I see media language as a cornerstone of linguistic and cultural literacy in Arabic; a medium which can be a useful goal in itself, but also a partial and practical goal for those who ultimately aim to study the Arabic literary tradition in all its elegance, diversity, and richness.

4 Contents

The book is arranged so that grammar notes are numbered and indexed for ease of reference; examples provided are based on information in the database. I have omitted or avoided names of persons and sometimes I have changed the content words to be less specific. For the most part, I have not created ad hoc examples; illustrations of syntactic structure are based on authentic usage. A section on how to use an Arabic dictionary is provided, as well as lists of Arabic and English technical terms, a bibliography that includes specialized and general works in Arabic, English, French, and German, and indexes based on Arabic terms and English terms.

Although I have tried to cover a wide range of aspects of contemporary written Arabic usage, there are bound to be lacunae, for which I am responsible. In terms of accuracy of description, the entire book has been submitted to native Arabic-speaking scholars and professional linguists for checking the grammatical descriptions and examples, but I alone am responsible for any shortcomings in that respect.

Procedures:

- Proper names have been left unvoiced on the final consonant, except where the voicing illustrates the grammatical point under discussion.
- For individual words or word groups taken out of context, the nominative case is used as the base or citation form.
- In giving English equivalents for Arabic structures, I have included in square brackets [] words inserted into English that are not present in the Arabic text but are necessary for understanding in English.
- I have included in parentheses and single quotes (‘ ’) a more or less exact word-in the Arabic text that does not appear in the English equivalent.

⁶ In his article “Broadcast news as a language standard,” Allan Bell discusses the central role of media in reinforcing and disseminating a prestige standard language, especially in multilingual, multi-dialectal, or diglossic societies. See Bell 1983.

- In running text, English equivalents of Arabic lexical items are referred to in single quotes ‘’.
- In giving English equivalents for Arabic lexical items, essentially synonymous English meanings are separated by commas, whereas a semicolon separates equivalents with substantially different meanings.
- For purposes of brevity, in providing English equivalents of lexical items with broad semantic ranges, I have selected only one or two common meanings. These are not meant to be full definitions, only very basic glosses.

Abbreviations

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
AP	active participle
C	any consonant
CA	Classical Arabic
comp.	comparative
def.	definite
demonstr.	demonstrative pronoun
ESA	Educated Spoken Arabic
f./ fem.	feminine
Fr.	French
FSA	Formal Spoken Arabic
fut.	future
g.	gender
gen.	genitive
imp.	imperative
indef.	indefinite
indic.	indicative
intr.	intransitive
lw	loanword
m./masc.	masculine
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
n.	noun
neg.	negative
no.	number
nom.	nominative
NP	noun phrase
o.s.	one's self
obj.	object
p./pers.	person

pass.	passive
perf.	perfect
pers.	person
pl./plur.	plural
plup.	pluperfect
pos.	positive
PP	passive participle
pres.	present
pron.	pronoun
quad.	quadriliteral
QAP	quadriliteral active participle
QPP	quadriliteral passive participle
refl.	reflexive
rel. pron.	relative pronoun
s.o.	someone
s.th.	something
sg./sing.	singular
subj.	subjunctive
superl.	superlative
trans.	transitive
v.	verb
V	any short vowel
vd.	voiced
vl.	voiceless
VN	verbal noun (<i>maSdar</i>)
VP	verb phrase
VV	any long vowel

Other diacritics:

boldface words	indicate key words in examples
(in examples)	
boldface syllables	indicate primary word stress
–	morpheme boundary ¹

¹ For purposes of structural clarity I have indicated inflectional morpheme boundaries within words when possible. There are points where morpheme boundaries merge (as in the endings of defective verbs and nouns); in these cases I have omitted a specific boundary marker. I have also omitted the morpheme boundary marker before the *taa'* *marbuuTa* (*-at ~ -a*) and the sound feminine plural ending (*-aat*).

/	separates singular and plural forms of substantives and past/present citation forms of verbs, e.g., <i>dars/duruus</i> ‘lesson/s’ <i>daras-a/ya-drus-u</i> ‘to study’
//	encloses phonemic transcription
‘ ’	encloses glosses or translations
*	indicates a hypothetical or reconstructed form
~	‘alternates with; or’

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Introduction to Arabic

Arabic is a Semitic language akin to Hebrew, Aramaic, and Amharic, and more distantly related to indigenous language families of North Africa. It possesses a rich literary heritage dating back to the pre-Islamic era, and during the rise and expansion of the Islamic empire (seventh to twelfth centuries, AD), it became the official administrative language of the empire as well as a leading language of international scholarly and scientific communication. It is today the native language of over 200 million people in twenty different countries as well as the liturgical language for over a billion Muslims throughout the world.

1 Afro-Asiatic and the Semitic language family

The Semitic language family is a member of a broader group of languages, termed Afro-Asiatic (also referred to as Hamito-Semitic). This group includes four subfamilies in addition to Semitic, all of which are indigenous languages of North Africa: (1) Tamazight (Berber) in the Northwest (Morocco, Mauretania, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya); (2) the Chad languages (including Hausa) in the Northwest Central area; (3) ancient Egyptian and Coptic; and (4) the Cushitic languages of Northeast Africa (Somalia, the Horn of Africa).¹ The Semitic part of the family was originally based farthest East, in the Levant, the Fertile Crescent, and the Arabian peninsula.

Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic (including Syriac), and Amharic are living language members of the Semitic group, but extinct languages such as Akkadian (Assyrian and Babylonian), Canaanite, and Phoenician are also Semitic. The Semitic language family has a long and distinguished literary history and several of its daughter languages have left written records of compelling interest and importance for the history of civilization.²

¹ See Zaborski 1992 for a brief description of the Afro-Asiatic language family and its general characteristics.

² For a general description of Arabic and the Semitic group, see Bateson 1967 (2003), 50–58 and Versteegh 1997, 9–22. For a more detailed discussion of the Semitic family and an extensive bibliography, see Hetzron 1987 and especially 1992, where he provides a list of fifty-one Semitic languages. For book-length introductions to comparative Semitic linguistic structure, see Wright 1966, Gray 1934, and especially Moscati 1969.

2 An overview of Arabic language history

The earliest stages of the Arabic language (Proto-Arabic or Old Arabic) are documented from about the seventh century BC until approximately the third century AD, but because of the paucity of written records, little is known about the nature of the language of those times. The only written evidence is in the form of epigraphic material (brief rock inscriptions and graffiti) found in northwest and central Arabia.³

The next period, the third through fifth centuries, is usually referred to as Early Arabic, a transitional period during which the language evolved into a closer semblance of Classical Arabic. There are again few literary artifacts from this age, but it is known that there was extensive commercial and cultural interaction with Christian and Jewish cultures during this time, an era of both Roman and Byzantine rule in the Levant and the Fertile Crescent.⁴

3 Classical Arabic

The start of the literary or Classical Arabic era is usually calculated from the sixth century, which saw a vigorous flourishing of the Arabic literary (or poetic) language, especially in public recitation and oral composition of poetry, a refined and highly developed formal oral art practiced by all Arab tribal groups and held in the highest esteem. During the sixth century, the Arabic ode, or *qaṣīda*, evolved to its highest and most eloquent form. It was characterized by sophisticated metrics and a “highly conventionalized scheme . . . upwards of sixty couplets all following an identical rhyme.”⁵

The form of language used in these odes is often referred to as the standard poetic language or the poetic koinè, and there are conflicting theories as to its nature – whether it was an elevated, distinctive, supra-tribal language shared by the leadership of the Arabic-speaking communities, or whether it was the actual vernacular of a region or tribe which was adopted by poets as a shared vehicle for artistic expression. In particular, debate has centered around the existence and use of desinential (i.e., word-final) case and mood inflection, a central feature of classical poetry but one which fell increasingly out of use in spoken Arabic, and which no longer exists in the urban vernaculars of today. Since little is

³ A condensed but authoritative overview of the history and development of Arabic is provided in the article “Arabiyya” in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (1960, I:561–603). See also Kaye 1987 and Fischer 1992. On the pre-Islamic period in particular, see Beeston 1981 and Versteegh 1997, 23–52. A good general reference in Arabic is Hijazi 1978.

⁴ For a comprehensive, multi-volume study of the Arab world and its relations with Rome and Byzantium in late classical antiquity see Shahīd 1981, 1984, 1989, and 1995.

⁵ Arberry 1957, 15. For further discussion of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, see Nicholson 1987. See also Zwettler 1978 for a survey and analysis of the Arabic oral poetry tradition.

known about the nature of the everyday spoken Arabic of pre-Islamic times or the different levels of linguistic formality that might have been used on different occasions, certainty has not been reached on this point, although theories abound.⁶

In the seventh century AD the Prophet Muhammad was gifted over a period of years (622–632 AD) with the revelation of verses which constituted a holy book, the *Qurʾān*, in Arabic, which became the key text of the new monotheistic religion, Islam. The text was rendered into an official version during the reign of the Caliph ʿUthmān (644–656 AD). From that time on, Arabic was not only a language of great poetic power and sophistication, but also permanently sacralized; as the chosen language for the *Qurʾān*, it became the object of centuries of religious study and exegesis, theological analysis, grammatical analysis and speculation.⁷ Throughout the European medieval period, from the seventh through the twelfth centuries, the Arabic-speaking world and the Islamic empire expanded and flourished, centered first in Mecca and Madina, then Damascus, and then Baghdad.⁸ Arabic became an international language of civilization, culture, scientific writing and research, diplomacy, and administration. From the Iberian peninsula in the West to Central and South Asia in the East stretched the world of Islam, and the influence of Arabic. The vast empire eventually weakened under the growing influence and power of emerging independent Muslim dynasties, with inroads made by the Crusades, Mongol invasions from the East, and with the expulsion of Muslims from the Iberian peninsula in the West. Arabic remained the dominant language in North Africa, the Levant, the Fertile Crescent, and the Arabian Peninsula, but lost ground to indigenous languages such as Persian in the East, and Spanish in the West.⁹

The language era from the thirteenth century to the eighteenth is generally known as “Middle Arabic,” although there is some ambiguity to this term.¹⁰ During this time, the Classical Arabic of early Islam remained the literary language, but the spoken Arabic of everyday life shifted into regional variations, each geographical

⁶ On the nature of the standard poetic language and the pre-Islamic koinè, see Zwettler 1978, especially Chapter 3; Rabin 1955; Fück 1955; Corriente 1976; and Versteegh 1984, especially Chapter 1.

⁷ For a brief introduction to the origins of Islam and the Qurʾānic revelations, see Nicholson 1930, especially Chapter 4.

⁸ The main dynasties of the Caliphate are: the Orthodox Caliphs (632–661 AD); the Umayyads, based in Damascus (661–750 AD); and the Abbasids, based in Baghdad (750–1258 AD).

⁹ Arabic has remained the dominant language in countries where the substratum language was originally Semitic or Afro-Asiatic, but not where the substratum languages were Indo-European, such as Persia or the Iberian peninsula. Aside from nationalistic and political considerations, linguistic compatibility between Arabic and its sister languages may have enabled certain populations to adapt more easily and thoroughly to Arabic. See Bateson 1967 (2003), 72–73 on this topic.

¹⁰ Versteegh (1997, 114–29) has a cogent discussion of the issues related to “Middle Arabic.” See also Blau 1961.

area evolving a characteristic vernacular.¹¹ The spoken variants of Arabic were not generally written down and therefore not preserved or anchored in any way to formalize them, to give them literary status or grammatical legitimacy. They continued to evolve along their own lively and supple paths, calibrating to the changes of everyday life over the centuries, but never reaching the status of separate languages.¹²

4 The modern period

The modern period of Arabic dates approximately from the end of the eighteenth century, with the spread of literacy, the concept of universal education, the inception of journalism, and exposure to Western writing practices and styles such as editorials, short stories, plays, and novels. Many linguists make a distinction between Classical Arabic (CA), the name of the literary language of the previous eras, and the modern form of literary Arabic, commonly known (in English) as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Differences between CA and MSA are primarily in style and vocabulary, since they represent the written traditions of very different historical and cultural eras, from the early medieval period to the modern. In terms of linguistic structure, CA and MSA are largely but not completely similar. Within MSA, syntax and style range from complex and erudite forms of discourse in learned usage to more streamlined expression in the journalistic, broadcasting, and advertising worlds. The high degree of similarity between CA and MSA gives strong continuity to the literary and Islamic liturgical tradition.

In Arabic, both CA and MSA are referred to as *al-luġha al-fuSHâ* اللغة الفصحى, or simply, *al-fuSHâ* الفصحى, which means “the most eloquent (language).” Badawi (1985) draws a helpful distinction between *fuSHâ al-‘aSr* فصحي العصر (of the modern era) (MSA) and *fuSHâ al-turâth* فصحي التراث (of heritage) (CA). This is by no means a clear or universally accepted delineation, and opinion in the Arab world is apparently divided as to the scope and definition of the term *fuSHâ* فصحي.¹³

¹¹ There is speculation that the written/spoken Arabic dichotomy began much earlier, during the ninth century. See Blau 1961, Versteegh 1984, Fück 1955. For an evaluation of the main theories of Arabic dialect evolution and an extensive bibliography on the topic, see Miller 1986 and Bateson 1967 (2003), 94–114.

¹² This contrasts distinctively with the situation in the Scandinavian countries, for example, where a similar situation prevailed in that a mother language, known as Common Scandinavian, prevailed from about AD 550–1050, and then evolved into six official, literary languages (Danish, Dano-Norwegian, New-Norwegian, Swedish, Faroese, and Icelandic), plus many dialects. Despite the fact that the offshoots are all considered independent languages, “within this core [mainland Scandinavia] speakers normally expect to be understood [by each other] when speaking their native languages” (Haugen 1976, 23–24).

¹³ See Parkinson’s informative 1991 article for an extensive discussion of *fuSHâ*. In his study of Egyptian native Arabic speakers’ ability with *fuSHâ*, he came to the conclusion that “The important point here is that people do not agree on a term, and that further they do not agree on what specific part of the communicative continuum, i.e., what specific varieties, any particular term should refer to” (33).

5 Arabic today

The Arab world today is characterized by a high degree of linguistic and cultural continuity. Arabic is the official language of all the members of the Arab League, from North Africa to the Arabian Gulf.¹⁴ Although geography (including great distances and land barriers such as deserts and mountains) accounts for much of the diversity of regional vernaculars, a shared history, cultural background and (to a great extent) religion act to unify Arab society and give it a profound sense of cohesion and identity.

MSA is the language of written Arabic media, e.g., newspapers, books, journals, street signs, advertisements – all forms of the printed word. It is also the language of public speaking and news broadcasts on radio and television. This means that in the Arab world one needs to be able to comprehend both the written and the spoken forms of MSA. However, in order to speak informally with people about ordinary everyday topics, since there is no universally agreed-upon standard speech norm, Arabs are fluent in at least one vernacular form of Arabic (their mother tongue), and they understand a wide range of others. This coexistence of two language varieties, the everyday spoken vernacular and a higher literary form is referred to in linguistic terms as “diglossia.”

5.1 Diglossia

The divergence among the several vernacular forms of Arabic, and between the vernaculars as a whole and the standard written form, make the linguistic situation of the Arab world a complex one.¹⁵ Instead of having one universally agreed-upon standard speech norm, each major region of the Arab world (such as the Levant, the Arabian Gulf, the western Arabian peninsula, western North Africa, Egypt, and the Sudan) has as its own speech norm, a spoken vernacular coexistent with the written standard – MSA. Vernacular speech is much more flexible and mutable than the written language; it easily coins words, adapts and adopts foreign expressions, incorporates the latest cultural concepts and trends, and propagates slang, thus producing and reflecting a rich, creative, and constantly changing range of innovation. Vernacular or colloquial languages have evolved their own forms of linguistic artistry and tradition in terms of popular songs, folk songs, punning and jokes, folktales and spontaneous performance art.

¹⁴ Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Mauretania, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrein, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

¹⁵ For more on diglossia, see Ferguson 1959a and 1996, and Walters, 1996. See also *Southwest Journal of Linguistics* 1991, which is a special issue devoted to diglossia. Haeri 2003 is a book-length study of the relationships among Classical Arabic, MSA, and colloquial Arabic in Egypt.

Their changeability, however, also means that Arabic vernaculars may vary substantially from one another in proportion to their geographical distance. That is, neighboring vernacular dialects such as Jordanian and Syrian are easily mutually intelligible to native Arabic speakers; however, distant regional dialects, such as Moroccan and Kuwaiti, have evolved cumulative differences which result in the need for conscious effort on the part of the speakers to accommodate each other and adjust their everyday language to a more mainstream level. Educated native Arabic speakers have enough mutual awareness of dialect characteristics that they can identify and adjust rapidly and naturally to the communicative needs of any situation.¹⁶ This spontaneous yet complex adjustment made by Arabic speakers depends on their knowledge of the vast reservoir of the mutually understood written language, which enables them to intercommunicate. Therefore, Arabic speakers share a wealth of resources in their common grasp of the literary language, MSA, and they can use this as a basis even for everyday communication.

In the re-calibration of Arabic speech to be less regionally colloquial and more formal, however, some researchers have identified another variation on spoken Arabic, an intermediate level that is termed “cultivated,” “literate,” “formal,” or “educated” spoken Arabic.¹⁷ Thus, the Arabic language situation is characterized not simply as a sharp separation between written forms and spoken forms, but as a spectrum or continuum of gradations from “high” (very literary or formal) to “low” (very colloquial), with several levels of variation in between.¹⁸ As Elgibali states (1993, 76), “we do not . . . have intuition or scholarly consensus concerning the number, discreteness and/or stability of the middle level(s).”

These levels are characterized by (at least) two different sociolinguistic dimensions: first, the social function; that is, the situations in which speakers find themselves – whether those situations are, for example, religious, formal, academic, casual or intimate. Secondly, these levels are conditioned by the educational and regional backgrounds of the speakers. In this intricate interplay of speech norms, situations, and backgrounds, educated native Arabic speakers easily find their way, making spontaneous, subtle linguistic adjustments to suit the dimensions of the occasion and the interlocutors.

¹⁶ For a detailed discussion of variation in Arabic see Elgibali 1993.

¹⁷ This is known as “cultivated” speech in Arabic: *‘ammīyyat al-muthaqqafīn* عامية المثقفين, or *lughat al-muthaqqafīn* لغة المثقفين. A number of Arabic linguists have researched and discussed this phenomenon, but there is no consensus as to the nature, extent, definition, and use of this part of the Arabic language continuum. The focus of the dispute centers around the ill-defined and unstable nature of this particular form of spoken Arabic and whether or not it can be distinguished as an identifiable linguistic level of Arabic. For more discussion of this point, see Badawi 1985, Elgibali 1993, El-Hassan 1978, Hary 1996, Mitchell 1986, Parkinson 1993, and Ryding 1990 and 1991.

¹⁸ See, for example, the five levels distinguished in Badawi 1985 and the “multiglossia” of Hary 1996.

5.2 Modern Standard Arabic: MSA

MSA is the written norm for all Arab countries as well as the major medium of communication for public speaking and broadcasting.¹⁹ It serves not only as the vehicle for current forms of literature, but also as a resource language for communication between literate Arabs from geographically distant parts of the Arab world. A sound knowledge of MSA is a mark of prestige, education, and social standing; the learning of MSA by children helps eliminate dialect differences and initiates Arab children into their literary heritage and historical tradition. It aids in articulating the connections between Arab countries and creating a shared present as well as a shared past. Education in the Arab countries universally reinforces the teaching and maintenance of MSA as the single, coherent standard written language.

A number of excellent Western pedagogical texts have been developed over the past fifty years in which MSA is discussed, described, and explained to learners of Arabic as a foreign language.²⁰ However, up to this point, there has been no comprehensive reference grammar designed for use by western students of MSA.

5.3 Arabic academies

Grammatical and lexical conservatism are hallmarks of MSA. Arabic language academies exist in several Arab capitals (Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Amman) to determine and regulate the procedures for incorporation of new terminology, and to conserve the overall integrity of MSA.²¹ Although foreign words are often borrowed into Arabic, especially for ever-expanding technical items and fields, the academies try to control the amount of borrowing and to introduce and encourage Arabic-derived equivalents, such as the Arabic word *hâtif* هاتف (pl. *hawâtif* هواتف) for ‘telephone’ (based on the Arabic lexical root *h-t-f*), to counteract the widespread use of the Arabized European term: *tiliifûn* تليفون.

According to Versteegh (1997, 178) “From the start, the goal of the Academy was twofold: to guard the integrity of the Arabic language and preserve it from dialectal and foreign influence, on the one hand, and to adapt the Arabic language to the needs of modern times, on the other.” Another researcher states

Arab academies have played a large role in the standardization of modern written and formal Arabic, to an extent that today throughout the Arab world there is more or less one modern standard variety. This is the variety used in newspapers, newsreel

¹⁹ For a discussion and definition of this particular term, see McLaughlin 1972.

²⁰ See, for example, Abboud and McCarus 1983; Abboud, Attieh, McCarus, and Rammuny 1997; Brustad, Al-Batal, and Al-Tonsi 1995 and 1996; Cowan 1964; Middle East Centre for Arab Studies (MECAS) 1959 and 1965; Rammuny 1994; Ziadeh and Winder 1957.

²¹ For more detail on Arabic language academies see Holes 1995, 251–55 and Stetkevych 1970, 23–25 and 31–33.

broadcasting, educational books, official and legal notices, academic materials, and instructional texts of all kinds. The three academies that have had the greatest influence are those based in Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad. Among the common objectives of these academies is the development of a common MSA for all Arabic-speaking peoples. (Abdulaziz 1986, 17).

5.4 Definitions of MSA

A fully agreed-upon definition of MSA does not yet exist, but there is a general consensus that modern Arabic writing in all its forms constitutes the basis of the identity of the language. Modern writing, however, covers an extensive range of discourse styles and genres ranging from complex and conservative to innovative and experimental. Finding a standard that is delimited and describable within this great range is a difficult task; however, there is an identifiable segment of the modern Arabic written language used for media purposes, and it has been the focus of linguists' attention for a number of years because of its stability, its pervasiveness, and its ability to serve as a model of contemporary written usage. Dissemination of a written (and broadcast) prestige standard by the news media is a widespread phenomenon, especially in multilingual, diglossic, and multi-dialectal societies.

One of the most complete descriptions of MSA is found in Vincent Monteil's *L'arabe moderne* in which he refers to "le néo-arabe" as "l'arabe classique, ou régulier, ou écrit, ou littéral, ou littéraire, sous sa forme moderne" (1960, 25). That is, he understands "modern Arabic" to be the modern version of the old classical language. He also states that "on pourrait aussi le traiter d'arabe 'de presse', étant donné le rôle déterminant qu'a joué, et que joue encore, dans sa diffusion . . . *lughat al-jarâ'id*" (1960, 27). Defining MSA through its function as the language of the Arabic news media is a useful way to delimit it since it is not officially codified as a phenomenon separate from Classical Arabic and because Arabic speakers and Arabic linguists have differing opinions on what constitutes what is referred to as *al-lughâ al-fuSHâ*. As Monteil also remarks, "s'il est exact de reconnaître . . . que l'arabe moderne 'se trouve être une langue assez artificielle, une langue plus ou moins fabriquée' plutôt qu'un 'usage codifié,' il faut déclarer . . . que 'c'est une langue vivante' et qui 'correspond à un besoin vital'" (1960, 28). It is these characteristics of newspaper language, its vitality and practicality, that make it a prime example of modern written Arabic usage.

Elsaid Badawi's phrase, *fuSHâ al-^ʿaSr* *فصحى العصر*, is his Arabic term for MSA (1985, 17), which he locates on a continuum (at "level two") between Classical Arabic ("level one") and Educated Spoken Arabic ("level three"). As he points out, the levels "are not segregated entities," (1985, 17) but shade into each other gradually. He identifies level two (MSA) as "mostly written" rather than spoken, and levels

two and three as essentially “in complementary distribution” with each other (1985, 19), that is, they function in separate spheres, with some overlap.

Leslie McLoughlin, in his 1972 article “Towards a definition of Modern Standard Arabic,” attempts to identify distinctive features of MSA from one piece of “quality journalism” (57) and provides the following definition which he borrows from M. F. Saʿīd: “that variety of Arabic that is found in contemporary books, newspapers, and magazines, and that is used orally in formal speeches, public lectures, learned debates, religious ceremonies, and in news broadcasts over radio and television” (58). Whereas Saʿīd states that MSA grammar is explicitly defined in grammar books (which would bring it close to CA), McLoughlin finds several instances in which MSA differs from CA, some of which are lexical and some of which are syntactic (72–73).

In her *Arabic Language Handbook* (1967; 2003, 84), Mary Catherine Bateson identified three kinds of change that differentiate MSA from CA: (1) a “series of ‘acceptable’ simplifications” in syntactic structures, (2) a “vast shift in the lexicon due to the need for technical terminology,” and (3) a “number of stylistic changes due to translations from European languages and extensive bilingualism.”

In the research done for this book, a wide variety of primarily expository texts, including Arabic newspaper and magazine articles, as well as other forms of MSA, were consulted and put into a database over a period of ten years. The morphological and syntactic features of the language used in these writings were then analyzed and categorized. This resulted in the finding that few structural inconsistencies exist between MSA and CA; the major differences are stylistic and lexical rather than grammatical. Particular features of MSA journalistic style include more flexible word order, coinage of neologisms, and loan translations from western languages, especially the use of the *ʾiDaafa* إضافة or annexation structure to provide equivalents for compound words or complex concepts. It is just this ability to reflect and embody change while maintaining the major grammatical conventions and standards that make journalistic Arabic in particular, a lively and widely understood form of the written language and, within the style spectrum of Arabic as a whole, a functional written standard for all Arab countries.

Phonology and script

This chapter covers the essentials of script and orthography as well as MSA phonological structure, rules of sound distribution and patterning, pronunciation conventions, syllable structure, and word stress. Four features of Arabic script are distinctive: first, it is written from right to left; second, letters within words are connected in cursive style rather than printed individually; third, short vowels are normally invisible; and finally, there is no distinction between uppercase and lowercase letters. These features can combine to make Arabic script seem impenetrable to a foreigner at first. However, there are also some features of Arabic script that facilitate learning it. First of all, it is reasonably phonetic; that is, there is a good fit between the way words are spelled and the way they are pronounced. And secondly, word structure and spelling are very systematic.

1 The alphabet

There are twenty-eight Arabic consonant sounds, twenty-six of which are consistently consonants, but two of which – *waaw* and *yaaʿ*¹ – are semivowels that serve two functions, sometimes as consonants and other times as vowels, depending on context.¹ For the most part, the Arabic alphabet corresponds to the distinctive sounds (phonemes) of Arabic, and each sound or letter has a name.² Arabic letter shapes vary because Arabic is written in cursive style, that is, the letters within a word are systematically joined together, as in English handwriting. There is no option in Arabic for “printing” or writing each letter of a word in independent form. There is no capitalization in Arabic script and therefore no distinction between capital and small letters. Letters are instead distinguished by their position in a word, i.e., whether they are word-initial, medial, or final. This is true

¹ “Certain consonants have some of the phonetic properties of vowels . . . they are usually referred to as approximants (or frictionless continuants), though [w] and [y] are commonly called semivowels, as they have exactly the same articulation as vowel glides. Although phonetically vowel-like, these sounds are usually classified along with consonants on functional grounds” Crystal 1997, 159. See also section 4.2.2. this chapter.

² For further reading about the Arabic alphabet and its close conformity with the phonemes of the language, see Gordon, 1970, 193–97.

both in printed Arabic and in handwriting. Handwriting is not covered in this text, but there are several excellent books that provide instruction in it.³

Every letter has four possible shapes: word-initial, medial, final, and separate. The following table gives the names of the sounds of Arabic listed in dictionary or alphabetical order, along with their shapes.⁴

2 Names and shapes of the letters

Arabic letter shape

Name	Final	Letter	Initial	Independent
(hamza)				ء
^ʾ alif	ﻻ	ﻻ	ا	ا
baa ^ʾ	ﺏ	ﺏ	ﺏ	ﺏ
taa ^ʾ	ﺕ	ﺕ	ﺕ	ﺕ
thaa ^ʾ	ﺙ	ﺙ	ﺙ	ﺙ
jiim	ﺝ	ﺝ	ﺝ	ﺝ
Haa ^ʾ	ﺡ	ﺡ	ﺡ	ﺡ
xaa ^ʾ	ﺦ	ﺦ	ﺦ	ﺦ
daal	ﺪ	ﺪ	ﺪ	ﺪ
dhaal	ﺬ	ﺬ	ﺬ	ﺬ
raa ^ʾ	ﺭ	ﺭ	ﺭ	ﺭ
zaay	ﺯ	ﺯ	ﺯ	ﺯ
siin	ﺲ	ﺲ	ﺲ	ﺲ
shiin	ﺶ	ﺶ	ﺶ	ﺶ
Saad	ﺺ	ﺺ	ﺺ	ﺺ
Daad	ﺾ	ﺾ	ﺾ	ﺾ
Taa ^ʾ	ﻁ	ﻁ	ﻁ	ﻁ

³ McCarus and Rammuny, 1974; Brustad, Al-Batal, and Al-Tonsi, 1995; Abboud and McCarus 1983, part 1:1–97.

⁴ There is an older order which is not used for organizing dictionary entries, but which is used in presenting elements of a text in outline, much as English speakers would make points A., B., and C. That order is called the ^ʾabjad, and is usually recited in the form of words: ^ʾabjad, hawwaz, HuTTii, kalaman, sa^ʿfaS, qurishat, thaxadh-un DaZagh-un (أَبْجَدْ هُوَ زَحْطِيْ كَلَمَنْ سَعْفَصْ قُرِشَتْ تُخَذُ ضَطْعُ).

Arabic letter shape (cont.)

Name	Final	Letter	Initial	Independent
<i>Zaa'</i>	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ
<i>'ayn</i>	ع	ع	ع	ع
<i>ghayn</i>	غ	غ	غ	غ
<i>faa'</i>	ف	ف	ف	ف
<i>qaaf</i>	ق	ق	ق	ق
<i>kaaf</i>	ك	ك	ك	ك
<i>laam</i>	ل	ل	ل	ل
<i>miim</i>	م	م	م	م
<i>nuun</i>	ن	ن	ن	ن
<i>haa'</i>	ه	ه	ه	ه
<i>waaw</i>	و	و	و	و
<i>yaa'</i>	ي	ي	ي	ي

The cursive nature of Arabic script, as shown above, requires several forms for each letter. Most letters are joined to others on both sides when they are medial, but there are a few that are called “non-connectors” which are attached to a preceding letter, but not to a following letter. The non-connectors are: *'alif*, *daal*, *dhaal*, *raa'*, *zaay*, and *waaw*, as shown in the following examples:

country	<i>bilaad</i>	بِلَاد
decision	<i>qaraar</i>	قَرَار
soldier	<i>jundiyy</i>	جُنْدِي
delicious	<i>ladhiidh</i>	لَذِيذ
ministry	<i>wizaara</i>	وِزَارَة
star	<i>kawkaba</i>	كَوْكَبَة

3 Consonants: pronunciation and description

It is impossible to provide a fully accurate description of Arabic sounds solely through written description and classification. Some sounds are very similar to English, others slightly similar, and others quite different. This section provides a phonemic chart and some general principles of pronunciation as well as

descriptions of Arabic sounds. The descriptions given here are for standard MSA pronunciation. Some sounds have allophones, or contextual variations, as noted.⁵

3.1 Phonemic chart of MSA consonants

	Labial	Labio-dental	Interdental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stops									
Voiceless				t ط T			k ك	q ق	ʔ ء
Voiced	b ب			d د D ض					
Affricates									
Voiceless									
Voiced					ج ج				
Fricatives									
Voiceless		f ف	th ث	s س S ص	sh ش	x خ		H ح	h ه
Voiced			dh ذ Z ظ	z ز		gh غ		ʕ ع	
Nasals	m م		n ن						
Laterals				l ل					
Flaps				r ر					
Semivowels (approximants)	w و				y ي				

3.2 Description of Arabic consonants

These descriptions are both technical and nontechnical, with examples relating to English sounds wherever possible.⁶

- 1 *hamza* (ʔ) (ء) voiceless glottal stop: like the catch in the voice between the syllables of “oh-oh”;⁷
- 2 *baaʔ* (b) (ب) voiced bilabial stop; /b/ as in “big”;
- 3 *taaʔ* (t) (ت) voiceless alveolar stop; /t/ as in “tin”;

⁵ Colloquial regional variants, such as the pronunciation of /j/ as /y/ in the Arab Gulf region, or /k/ plus front vowel as /ch/ in Iraqi colloquial, are not provided here because they are nonstandard for formal pronunciation of MSA.

⁶ For an in-depth, traditional account of Arabic phonetics, see Gairdner 1925. For technical analyses of Arabic phonology and its history, see Al-Ani 1970 and Semaan 1968.

⁷ As Gairdner points out, another good example of this in English would be the hiatus prefixed to the stressed word “our” in the sentence “It wasn’t our fault” (1925, 30).

- 4 *thaa'* (th) (ث) voiceless interdental fricative; /θ/ or /th/ as in “thin”;⁸
- 5 *jiim* (j) (ج) There are three standard regional variants:
 (a) voiced alveopalatal affricate; /j/ as in “jump”;
 (b) voiced alveopalatal fricative (zh): as the /z/ in “azure” or the medial sound in “pleasure”;
 (c) voiced velar stop; /g/ as in “goat”;⁹
- 6 *Haa'* (H) (ح) voiceless pharyngeal fricative; a sound produced deep in the throat using the muscles involved in swallowing. Constrict these muscles while at the same time pushing breath through – as though you were trying to stage-whisper “Hey!”¹⁰
- 7 *xaa'* (x) (خ) voiceless velar fricative; like the /ch/ in Bach or Scottish loch; in some romanization systems it is represented by /kh/;
- 8 *daal* (d) (د) voiced alveolar stop; /d/ as in “door”;
- 9 *dhaal* (dh) (ذ) voiced interdental fricative: /ð/ or /dh/ pronounced like the /th/ in “this”;
- 10 *raa'* (r) (ر) voiced alveolar flap or trill: as /r/ in Italian or Spanish; a good example in English is to pronounce the word “very” as “veddy”;
- 11 *zaay* (z) (ز) voiced alveolar fricative: /z/ as in zip;
- 12 *siin* (s) (س) voiceless alveolar fricative: /s/ as in sang;
- 13 *shiin* (sh) (ش) voiceless palatal fricative: /sh/ as in ship;
- 14 *Saad* (S) (ص) voiceless velarized alveolar fricative: /s/ but pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;
- 15 *Daad* (D) (ض) voiced velarized alveolar stop: /d/ but pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;
- 16 *Taa'* (T) (ط) voiceless velarized alveolar stop: /t/ pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;

⁸ Arabic has two different symbols for the two phonemes or different kinds of “th” in English - the voiceless, as in “think” (often transcribed as /θ/) and the voiced interdental as in “them” (often transcribed as /ð/). *Thaa'* /ث/ is the voiceless one whereas *dhaal* /ذ/ is voiced. In this text, the voiceless version /θ/ is romanized as /th/, and the voiced /ð/ as /dh/.

⁹ The variations are essentially as follows: the first is more characteristic of the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq, the second more Levantine and North African, and the third specifically Egyptian and Sudanese pronunciation. Occasionally, a mixed pronunciation of *jiim* is found, with one variant alternating with another, especially /j/ and /zh/.

¹⁰ The nature of the pharyngeal consonants *Haa'* and ‘ayn is described in detail in McCarus and Rammuny 1974, 124–34 and in Gairdner 1925, 27–29.

- 17 *Zaa'* (Z) (ظ) There are two standard variants of this phoneme:
 (a) voiced velarized interdental fricative: /dh/ as in
 "this" pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a
 raised and tensed tongue;
 (b) voiced velarized alveolar fricative: /z/ pronounced
 farther back in the mouth with a raised and tense
 tongue;¹¹
- 18 *'ayn* (ع) (ع) voiced pharyngeal fricative: this is a "strangled" sound
 that comes from deep in the throat, using the muscles
 used in swallowing;¹²
- 19 *ghayn* (gh) (غ) voiced velar fricative: a "gargled" sound, much like
 French /r/;
- 20 *faa'* (f) (ف) voiceless labiodental fricative: as /f/ in "fine";
- 21 *qaaf* (q) (ق) voiceless uvular stop: this is made by "clicking" the
 back of the tongue against the very back of the mouth,
 where the uvula is;
- 22 *kaaf* (k) (ك) voiceless velar stop: /k/ as in "king";
- 23 *laam* (l) (ل) voiced lateral: this has two pronunciations:
 (a) /l/ as in "well" or "full" (back or "dark" /l/);¹³
 (b) /l/ as in "lift" or "leaf" (fronted or "light" /l/);¹⁴
- 24 *miim* (m) (م) voiced bilabial continuant: /m/ as in "moon";
- 25 *nuun* (n) (ن) voiced nasal continuant: /n/ as in "noon";
- 26 *haa'* (h) (ه) voiceless glottal fricative: /h/ as in "hat";
- 27 *waaw* (w) or (uu) (و) bilabial semivowel: /w/ as in "wind" or long vowel
 /uu/ pronounced like the "oo" in "food";
- 28 *yaa'* (y) or (ii) (ي) palatal semivowel: /y/ as in "yes" or long vowel /ii/
 pronounced like the long /i/ in "machine."¹⁵

The notation of Arabic consonants and their use in orthography is quite straightforward, except for the following considerations, which are described in detail: the orthography and pronunciation of the letter *hamza*, the spelling and pronunciation variants of the the *taa'* *marbuuTa*, and the doubling of consonant

¹¹ Pronunciation of *Dhaa* / *Zaa'* varies regionally; the interdental and alveolar fricatives are the most widely accepted.

¹² See note 10.

¹³ Technically, this variant of /l/ is velarized. The tongue is raised in the back of the mouth. Although primarily an allophonic variant, for a theory of its status as a separate phoneme in Arabic, see Ferguson 1956.

¹⁴ This variant of /l/ is more fronted and palatalized even than the light /l/ in English and is closer to French /l/ as in "belle." See Gairdner 1925, 17–19 for discussion of "dark" and "light" /l/.

¹⁵ When *yaa'* is the final letter of a word, it is printed without dots in Egyptian publications; elsewhere in the Arab world, it receives its two dots at all times and in all positions.

strength (gemination). The nature of the approximants (semivowels) *waaw* and *yaa'* is also discussed at greater length under the section on vowels.

3.3 *hamza* rules: orthography and pronunciation

There are two kinds of *hamza*, strong and weak. Strong *hamza* is a regular consonant and is pronounced under all circumstances, whether in initial, medial, or final position in a word. Weak *hamza* or “elidable” *hamza* is a phonetic device that helps pronunciation of consonant clusters and only occurs at the beginning of a word. It is often deleted in context.

3.3.1 Strong *hamza* (*hamzat al-qatʿ* هَمْزَةُ الْقَطْع):

The Arabic letter *hamza* (ʾ) is often written with what is termed a “seat,” or “chair” (*kursii* كُرْسِي in Arabic), but sometimes the *hamza* sits aloof, by itself. There is a set of rules to determine which chair, if any, *hamza* will take, depending on its position within a word, as follows:

3.3.1.1 CHAIR RULES

- (1) The chairs used for *hamza* are identical with the letters for long vowels: *ʾalif*, *waaw*, and *yaa'*. When *yaa'* is used as a seat for *hamza*, it loses its two dots.
- (2) When used as chairs, the long vowels are not pronounced. They appear in the script only as seats for the *hamza*, not as independent sounds.
- (3) The choice of which chair to use (*ʾalif*, *waaw*, or *yaa'*) is determined by two things: position of the *hamza* in the word and/or the nature of the vowels immediately adjacent to *hamza*.

3.3.1.2 INITIAL *hamza* CHAIR RULES: When *hamza* is the initial consonant in a word, it has an *ʾalif* seat. When the vowel with *hamza* is a *fatHa* or *Damma*, the *hamza* is written on top of the *ʾalif*, and when the vowel with the *hamza* is *kasra*, the *hamza* is usually written under the *ʾalif*.¹⁶ Note that the vowel after *hamza* can be a short or a long one. In written Arabic, *hamza* in initial position is usually invisible, along with its short vowel. Here it is provided.

mother	ʾumm	أُمُّ
professor	ʾustaadh	أُسْتَاذ
where?	ʾayna	أَيْنَ
bigger	ʾakbar	أَكْبَرُ
Islam	ʾislaam	إِسْلَام
Iran	ʾiiraan	إِيرَان

¹⁶ In certain kinds of script, the *hamza* with *kasra* is split, with the *hamza* remaining on top of the *ʾalif* and the *kasra* being written below.

3.3.1.3 MEDIAL *hamza* When *hamza* occurs in the middle of a word, it normally has a seat determined by the nature of its adjacent vowels. The vowel sounds contiguous to *hamza*, on either side, whether short or long, have a firm order of priority in determining the seat for *hamza*. That order is: *i-u-a*. That is, the first priority in seat-determination is an /i/, /ii/, or /y/ sound, which will give *hamza* a *yaa'* seat (*yaa'* without dots). In the absence of an /i/ sound, an /u/ or /uu/ sound gives *hamza* a *waaw* seat, and this has second priority. If there is no /i/ or /u/ sound, an /a/ or /aa/ gives *hamza* an *'alif* seat, and this has the lowest priority. This system is easier to understand with examples:

(1) *yaa'* seat:

organization	hay ^o a	هَيْئَة
deputy	naa ^o ib	نَائِب
Israel	^o israa ^o iiil	إِسْرَائِيل
well	bi ^o r	بَيْتْر
refuge	maw ^o il	مَوْئِل
he was asked	su ^o ila	سُئِلَ

(2) *waaw* seat:

educator	mu ^o addib	مُؤَدِّب
affairs	shu ^o uun	شُؤُون
he composes	yu ^o allif	يُؤَلِّف
question	su ^o aal	سُؤَال
feminine	mu ^o annath	مُؤَنَّث

(3) *'alif* seat:

visa	ta ^o shiira	تَأْشِيرَة
she asked	sa ^o alat	سَأَلَتْ
head	ra ^o s	رَأْس
late, delayed	muta ^o axxir	مُتَأَخِّر

- (4) **Medial aloof *hamza*:** When *hamza* occurs medially after *waaw* as long vowel /uu/, or after *'alif* followed by an /a/ sound, it sits aloof. In general, Arabic script avoids having two adjacent *'alifs*.

measures	^ʔ ijraa ^ʔ aat	إِجْرَاءَات
attacks	i ^ʔ tidaa ^ʔ aat	اعْتِدَاءَات
manliness, valor	muruu ^ʔ a	مُرُوَّة
he wondered	tasaa ^ʔ ala	تَسَاءَلَ

3.3.1.4 FINAL *hamza*: When *hamza* is the final letter of a word, it can either sit aloof or have a seat.

- (1) **Aloof:** *Hamza* sits aloof at the end of a word when it is preceded by a long vowel:

calmness	huduu ^ʔ	هُدُوْء
port	miinaa ^ʔ	مِيْنَاء
free; innocent	barii ^ʔ	بَرِيْء

Or when it is preceded by a consonant (with *sukun*):

part	juz ^ʔ	جُزْء
thing	shay ^ʔ	شَيْء
burden	ʿib ^ʔ	عِبْء

- (2) **On a seat:** Final *hamza* sits on a seat when it is preceded by a short vowel. The nature of the short vowel determines which seat *hamza* will have. A *fatHa* gives it an ^ʔalif seat, a *kasra* gives it a yaa^ʔ (without dots) seat, and a *Damma* gives it a waaw seat.

prophecy	tanabbu ^ʔ	تَنْبُؤْ
shore	shaaTi ^ʔ	شَاطِئْ
warm	daafi ^ʔ	دَافِئْ
principle	mabda ^ʔ	مَبْدَأْ

- (3) **Shift of seat with suffixes:** It is important to note that word-final *hamza* may shift to medial *hamza* if the word gets a suffix and *hamza* is no longer the final consonant. Suffixes such as possessive pronouns (on nouns) and verb inflections cause this to happen. Short vowel suffixes (case and mood-markers) normally do not influence the writing of *hamza*. Here are some examples:

friends (nom.)	^ʔ aSdiqaa ^ʔ -u	أَصْدِقَاءُ
our friends (nom.)	^ʔ aSdiqaa ^ʔ -u-naa	أَصْدِقَاؤُنَا

our friends (gen.)	^ʾ aSdiqaa ^ʾ -i-naa	أَصْدِقَانَا
our friends (acc.)	^ʾ aSdiqaa ^ʾ -a-naa	أَصْدِقَاءَنَا
he read	qara ^ʾ -a	قَرَأَ
we read	qara ^ʾ -naa	قَرَأْنَا
they (m.) read	qara ^ʾ -uu ¹⁷	قَرَأُوا
you (f.) are reading	ta-qra ^ʾ -iina	تَقْرئينَ

3.3.2 hamza plus long /aa/ madda

A special symbol stands for *hamza* followed by a long /aa/ sound: /^ʾaa/. The symbol is called *madda* ('extension') and looks like this: ^ʾآ. It is always written above ^ʾalif and is sometimes referred to as ^ʾalif madda. It can occur at the beginning of a word, in the middle, or at the end. Even if it occurs at the beginning of a word, the *madda* notation is visible, unlike the regular initial *hamza*.

Asia	^ʾ aasiyaa	آسيا
final	^ʾ aaxir	آخِر
mirror	mir ^ʾ aah	مِرآة
minarets	ma ^ʾ aadhin	مَآذِن
the Qur ^ʾ ân	al-qur ^ʾ aan	الْقُرْآن
establishments	munsha ^ʾ aat	مُنشآت
they (2 m.) began	bada ^ʾ aa	بَدَأَ

3.3.3 Weak hamza (hamzat al-waSl همزة الوصل)

Hamzat al-waSl, elidable *hamza*, is a phonetic device affixed to the beginning of a word for ease of pronunciation. It is used only in initial position, and is accompanied by a short vowel: /i/, /u/, or /a/.¹⁸ For purposes of phonology and spelling it is necessary to know whether an initial *hamza* is a strong one or an elidable one, since elidable *hamza* drops out in pronunciation unless it is utterance-initial. When elidable *hamza* drops out, its ^ʾalif seat remains in spelling, but it gets a different symbol on top of it, called a *waSl*, which indicates deletion of the glottal stop and liaison between the previous vowel and the following consonant.¹⁹ If a word starting with

¹⁷ It is the style in certain Arab countries to write even the third person masculine plural with *hamza* sitting on ^ʾalif, e.g., qara^ʾuu قَرَأُوا. Either way is correct.

¹⁸ It is a phonological rule that no word may start with a consonant cluster in Arabic, but certain morphological processes result in patterns or groupings of affixes that cause consonant clusters.

¹⁹ The technical term for this process is *aphaeresis* or *aphesis*, deletion of an initial vowel of a word and substituting for it the final vowel of the previous word, as the deletion of the initial "a" in "are" in the contraction "we're" or the initial "i" of "is" in "she's."

elidable *hamza* is preceded by a consonant, a “helping vowel” is affixed to the consonant in order to facilitate pronunciation. Neither *hamzat al-waSl* nor *waSla* are visible in ordinary text.

In the transcription system used in this text, words that start with initial *hamzat al-waSl* do not have the transliterated *hamza* symbol (°). The main categories of words that begin with *hamzat al-waSl* are as follows:

3.3.3.1 DEFINITE ARTICLE, *a/- الـ*: The short vowel that accompanies elidable *hamza* of the definite article is *fatHa*.

(1) **Sentence-initial:** The sentence-initial *hamza* is pronounced.

الْوِزَارَةُ هُنَاكَ.	الْمُنَافَسَةُ قَوِيَّةٌ.
<i>al-wizaarat-u hunaka.</i>	<i>al-munaafasat-u qawiyyat-un.</i>
The ministry is (over) there.	Competition is strong.

(2) **Non-sentence-initial:** The *hamza* and its short vowel /a/ on the definite article are deleted, although the °alif seat remains in the spelling.

هُمْ فِي الْوِزَارَةِ.	لَكِنَّ الْمُنَافَسَةَ قَوِيَّةٌ.
<i>hum fii l-wizaarat-i.</i>	<i>laakinna l-munaafasat-a qawiyyat-un.</i>
They are at the ministry.	But the competition is strong.

3.3.3.2 CERTAIN COMMON WORDS: The short vowel that accompanies elidable *hamza* of this set of words is *kasra*.

son	<i>ibn</i>	ابْنٌ
name	<i>ism</i>	اسْمٌ
woman	<i>imra'a</i>	امْرَأَةٌ
two	<i>ithnaan</i>	اِثْنَانِ

(1) **Utterance-initial:** The *hamza* is pronounced.

ابْنِي مُسَافِرٌ.	اسْمُ اللَّهِ
<i>ibn-ii musaafir-un.</i>	<i>ism-u llaah-i</i>
My son is travelling.	the name of God

(2) **Non-utterance-initial:** The *hamza* and its *kasra* are omitted in pronunciation. Sometimes the °alif seat of the *hamza* is also omitted in these words.

سَافَرَ مَعَ ابْنِي.	بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ
<i>saafar-a ma°a bn-ii.</i>	<i>bi-sm-i-llaaah-i</i>
He traveled with my son.	in the name of God

3.3.3.3 FORMS VII-X VERBAL NOUNS AND PAST TENSE VERBS: The short vowel that accompanies elidable *hamza* of this set of words is *kasra*. The *ʿalif* seat remains in spelling.

اِنْتَخَبَ الشَّعْبُ رَئِيساً جَدِيداً.

intaxab-a l-shaʿb-u raʿiis-an jadiid-an.

The people elected a new president.

وَانْتَخَبَ الشَّعْبُ رَئِيساً جَدِيداً.

wa-ntaxab-a l-shaʿb-u raʿiis-an jadiid-an.

And the people elected a new president.

3.3.3.4 IMPERATIVE VERBS OF FORMS I AND VII-X: The short vowel that accompanies these imperative forms is either *kasra* or *Damma*. The *ʿalif* seat remains.

اسْتَمِعْ.

istamiʿ.

Listen.

فَاسْتَمِعْ.

fa-stamiʿ.

So listen.

اقْرَأْ هَذِهِ الْكَلِمَاتِ.

iqraʿ haadhihi l-kalimaat-i.

Read these words.

وَاقْرَأْ هَذِهِ الْكَلِمَاتِ.

wa-qraʿ haadhihi l-kalimaat-i.

And read these words.

3.3.3.5 SPELLING BORROWED WORDS THAT START WITH CONSONANT CLUSTERS: Terms borrowed from other languages into Arabic and which start with consonant clusters, need a helping vowel to facilitate the onset of the pronunciation of the consonant cluster. The helping vowel is written with *hamza* and seated on an *ʿalif* *Tawiila*. For example:

studio	<i>istuudyuu</i>	اِسْتُوْدِيُو
strategic	<i>istraatiijiyy</i>	اِسْتِرَاتِيْجِيّ
stable; barn	<i>isTabl</i>	اِسْطَبْل

3.4 *taaʿ marbuuTa* (تاء مَرْبُوطَة)

3.4.1 Spelling

The *taaʿ marbuuTa* is a spelling variant of regular *taaʿ*. It occurs only in word-final position on nouns and adjectives. It is not an optional variant, but determined by word meaning and morphology. In shape, it looks like a *haaʿ* with two dots over it.

corner	zaawiya	زَاوِيَّة
necessity	Daruura	ضَرُورَة
basket	salla	سَلَّة

3.4.2 Meaning and use

In most cases, *taa' marbuuTa* is a marker of feminine gender. For example, an Arabic word that refers to a person's occupation may be either masculine or feminine, depending on whether one is referring to a man or woman (i.e., engineer, teacher, doctor, student). The masculine singular is a base or unmarked form, and the feminine singular is marked by the presence of a *taa' marbuuTa*.

ambassador (m./f.)	safiir /safiira	سَفِير / سَفِيرَة
king/queen	malik/malika	مَلِك / مَلِكَة
prince/princess	'amiir/ 'amiira	أَمِير / أَمِيرَة
student (m./f.)	Taalib/Taaliba	طَالِب / طَالِبَة

Some nouns, however, are inherently feminine in gender and always spelled with *taa' marbuuTa*. For example:

storm	'aaSifa	عَاصِفَة
island	jaziira	جَزِيرَة
culture	thaqaafa	ثَقَافَة
flower	zahra	زَهْرَة

In addition to showing feminine gender on nouns, *taa' marbuuTa* also shows feminine gender on adjectives:

مُنَظَّمة دَوْلِيَّة	الطَّالِبَة المُسْلِمَة
munaZZama duwaliyya	al-Taaliba l-muslima
an international organization	the Muslim student (f.)
فُرْصَة سَعِيدَة	مَمْلَكَة مُسْتَقَلَّة
furSa sa'iida	mamlaka mustaqilla
a happy occasion	an independent kingdom

3.4.3 Pronunciation

In pronunciation, *taa' marbuuTa* sometimes has the *haa'* sound and other times, *taa'*, so that it is a combination of *taa'* and *haa'* in terms of its written shape and its pronunciation. One consistent feature of *taa' marbuuTa* is that it is always preceded by an /a/ sound, usually short /a/ (*fatHa*), but sometimes, long /aa/ (*'alif*).

ship	safiina	سَفِينَة
apple	tuffaaHa	تُفَّاحَة
giraffe	zaraafa	زَرَّافَة
life	Hayaat	حَيَاة
canal; channel	qanaat	قَنَاة
prayer	Salaat	صَلَاة

3.4.3.1 FULL FORM: In full form pronunciation, the *taa' marbuuTa* plus final inflectional vowel is pronounced as /t/:

شَبْكَة مَعْلُومَاتِيَّة	فِي حَيَاة طَوِيلَة
shabkat-un ma ^h luumaatiyyat-un	fii Hayaat-in Tawiilat-in
information network	in a long lifetime
الْجَامِعَة الْوَطَنِيَّة	عَاصِمَة الْبَلَدِ
al-jaami ^h at-u l-waTaniyyat-u	^h aaSimat-u l-balad-i
the national university	the capital of the country

3.4.3.2 PAUSE FORM PRONUNCIATION: In pause form, the final inflectional vowel is not pronounced, and, usually, **neither is the *taa' marbuuTa***. In most pause form situations, the pronunciation of *taa' marbuuTa* becomes *haa'*. Because a final /h/ sound is hard to hear, it sounds as though the word is pronounced only with a final /a/, the *fatHa* that precedes the *taa' marbuuTa*.²⁰

a democratic republic	jumhuuriyya dimuqraaTiyya	جُمْهُورِيَّة دِمُقْرَاطِيَّة
a large island	jaziira kabiira	جَزِيرَة كَبِيرَة

(1) Exceptions:

(1.1) If the *taa' marbuuTa* is preceded by a long /aa/, pronunciation of the /t/ in pause form is optional:

life	Hayaat or Hayaa(h)	حَيَاة
young woman	fataat or fataa(h)	فَتَاة
equality	musaawaat or musaawaa(h)	مُسَاوَاة

²⁰ For pronunciation of *taa' marbuuTa* on the first term of an annexation phrase (^hiDaafa), see Chapter 8, section 1.2.1.5.

- (1.2) If the word ending in *taa'* *marbuuTa* is the first term of an annexation structure (*iDaafa*), the *taa'* is usually pronounced, even in pause form:

مَدِينَةٌ دِمَشَقْ	قِصَّةُ حُبٍّ
<i>madiinat dimashq</i>	<i>qiSSat Hubb</i>
(both words in pause form)	(both words in pause form)
the city of Damascus	a love story

3.5 Consonant doubling (gemination): *tashdiid* تَشْدِيد

Sometimes consonants are doubled in Arabic. This is both a spelling and pronunciation feature and means that the consonants are pronounced with double strength or emphasis.²¹ The technical term for this kind of doubling is “gemination.” In Arabic, the doubling process is called *tashdiid*, and instead of writing the letter twice, Arabic has a diacritical symbol that is written above the doubled consonant which shows that it is pronounced with twice the emphasis. The name of the symbol is *shadda* (‘intensification’), and it looks like this: ّ. Like the short vowels, *shadda* does not normally appear in written text, but it is necessary to know that it is there. Here are some examples of words that include doubled or geminated consonants:

freedom	<i>Hurriyya</i>	حُرِّيَّةٌ	surgeon	<i>jarraaH</i>	جَرَّاحٌ
pomegranate	<i>rummaan</i>	رُمَّانٌ	very	<i>jidd-an</i>	جِدًّا
to appoint	<i>‘ayyana</i>	عَيَّنَ	pilgrimage	<i>Hajj</i>	حَجٌّ
love	<i>Hubb</i>	حُبٌّ	to sing	<i>ghannaa</i>	غَنَّى
doubt	<i>shakk</i>	شَكٌّ	to destroy	<i>xarraba</i>	خَرَّبَ

3.5.1 Reasons for gemination

Gemination can result from a lexical root that contains a doubled root consonant (such as the root *H-b-b* for *Hubb*, ‘love’), or it can result from a derivational process, that is, it can change word meaning and create words. For example, the verb stem *daras* means ‘to study,’ but a derived form of that verb, *darras*, with doubled *raa'*, means ‘to teach.’ The meanings are related, but not the same.

Gemination can also be the result of assimilation, the absorption of one sound into another. In these cases, the process is phonetic and not phonemic, i.e., it is a

²¹ In English, the spelling of a word with a double consonant does not indicate that the pronunciation of that consonant is stronger (e.g., kitten, ladder, offer). However, when an identical consonant is pronounced across word boundaries, it is pronounced more strongly. For example, in the following phrases, the last letter of the first word and the first letter of the last word combine together and result in stronger pronunciation: “shelf-full,” “good deed,” “hot tea,” or “still life.” This kind of consonant strengthening resembles the process of gemination in Arabic.

rule of pronunciation and does not affect the meaning of a word. For example, the /l/ of the definite article /al-/ is assimilated to certain consonants when they begin words (e.g., *al-daftar*, ‘the notebook,’ is pronounced *ad-daftar*).²²

4 Vowels

The Modern Standard Arabic sound system has six vowel phonemes: three “long” ones and three “short”: /ii/ and /i/, /uu/ and /u/, /aa/ and /a/. The difference in length is not a difference in vowel quality, but in the length of time that the vowel is held. The distinction between short and long is similar to difference in length in musical notation, where there are quarter notes, half notes, and whole notes, each one held twice as long as the other. It is possible to think of short vowels as resembling quarter notes and long vowels as half notes, the long vowels being held approximately double the length of time of the short vowels. Long vowels are represented in the Arabic alphabet by the letters ‘*alif*’ (aa), *waaw* (uu) and *yaa’* (ii). They are written into words as part of the words’ spelling. Short vowels, on the other hand, are not independent letters and are written only as diacritical marks above and below the body of the word. In actual practice, short vowels are not indicated in written Arabic text; they are invisible.

The pronunciation of vowels, especially /aa/ and /a/, varies over a rather wide range, depending on word structure and the influence of adjacent consonants, but also on regional variations in pronunciation. Moreover, the letter ‘*alif*’ has several different spelling variants and the letters *waaw* and *yaa’* function both as vowels and as consonants.

4.1 Phonemic chart of MSA vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	i/ii ِ ي		u/uu ُ و
Mid			
Low		a/aa َ ا	

4.2 Long vowels

4.2.1 ‘*alif*’

4.2.1.1 PRONUNCIATION: The letter ‘*alif*’ represents a long /aa/ sound. The quality of this sound varies from being fronted (as in the English word “fad”), a low

²² See section 8.1 on the definite article in this chapter.

central vowel (as in “far”), or a low back vowel (as in the English word “saw.”) Here are some words with long /aa/:

	Fronted:			Backed:	
people	<i>naas</i>	ناس	fire	<i>naar</i>	نار
during	<i>xilaal</i>	خِلَال	system	<i>niZaam</i>	نِظَام
door	<i>baab</i>	باب	leader	<i>qaa'id</i>	قَائِد
peace	<i>salaam</i>	سَلَام	lighthouse	<i>manaara</i>	مَنَارَة
ruler	<i>Haakim</i>	حَاكِم	neighbor	<i>jaar</i>	جَار

Usually, in order to have the central or backed pronunciation, the word has a back consonant, either a velarized one (S, D, T, or Z) or a *qaaf*, as the ones above illustrate. The backed pronunciation is also used when *ʾalif* is followed immediately by *raaʾ* (as in the words *manaara*, *naar*, and *jaar*). However, in certain parts of the Arab world, especially the Eastern regions (such as Iraq), the backed pronunciation is more frequent.

4.2.1.2 SPELLING VARIANTS OF *ʾalif*. There are three variations of the letter *ʾalif*: *ʾalif qaSiira* (‘dagger’ *ʾalif*), *ʾalif maqSuura* (‘shortened’ *ʾalif*) and regular *ʾalif* (*ʾalif Tawiila* – ‘tall’ *ʾalif*). These variants are not optional but are determined by derivational etymology and spelling conventions.

4.2.1.3 *ʾalif Tawiila* أَلِف طَوِيلَة. This is the standard form of *ʾalif*. It is a non-connecting letter written into the word:

- (1) ***ʾalif Tawiila* in initial position:** In initial position, *ʾalif* is not a vowel; it is always a seat for *hamza* (accompanied by a short vowel) or *madda* (*hamza* plus long /aa/).

(1.1) ***ʾalif* with *hamza* and short vowel:**

four	<i>ʾarbaʿa</i>	أَرْبَعَة
brothers	<i>ʾixwaan</i>	إِخْوَان
pipe	<i>ʾunbuub</i>	أَنْبُوب

(1.2) ***ʾalif* with *madda*:**

August	<i>ʾaab</i>	آب
instrument	<i>ʾaala</i>	آلَة
other (m.)	<i>ʾaaxar</i>	آخَر

- (2) **ʾalif in medial position:** In medial position, ʾalif *Tawiila* is connected to the letter that precedes it, but it does not connect to the following letter:

north; left	<i>shamaal</i>	شَمَال
she said	<i>qaalat</i>	قَالَتْ
side	<i>jaanib</i>	جَانِب

The letter ʾalif has a special relationship with a preceding *laam*: it sits inside the curve of the *laam* at an angle. This special combination of letters is called a “ligature,” and is even occasionally cited as part of the alphabet (“*laam-ʾalif*”).

peace	<i>salaam</i>	سَلَام
Jordan	<i>al-ʾurdun</i>	الأُرْدُن
no	<i>laa</i>	لَا

- (3) **ʾalif *Tawiila* in final position:**

- (3.1) **ʾalif as long vowel in word-final position:** At the end of a word ʾalif *Tawiila* may occur:

here	<i>hunaa</i>	هَـٰنَا
Malta	<i>maalTaa</i>	مَالِطَا
this (m.)	<i>haadhaa</i>	هَـٰذَا

- (3.2) **ʾalif *Tawiila* with nunation:** A word-final ʾalif may be written with two *fatHas* above it, signaling that the word is nunated, that is, marked for indefinite accusative case (and pronounced *-an*). In this case, the ʾalif is not pronounced; it is only a seat or “chair” for the two *fatHas* that mark the indefinite accusative. The accusative case often indicates that a noun is an object of a transitive verb, or it may mark an adverbial function. For further description and examples of the accusative, see Chapter 7 on noun inflections. Some examples of adverbial accusatives ending with ʾalif plus nunation include:

welcome	<i>ʾahl-an</i>	أَهْلًا
tomorrow	<i>ghad-an</i>	غَدًا
thanks	<i>shukr-an</i>	شُكْرًا
greatly	<i>kathiir-an</i>	كَثِيرًا
very	<i>jidd-an</i>	جَدًّا
finally	<i>ʾaxiir-an</i>	أَخِيرًا

(3.3) **silent inflectional 'alif Tawiila:** The 'alif Tawiila is written as part of the third person masculine plural past tense inflection, but it is only a spelling convention and it is **not pronounced**. If a pronoun suffix is added to this verb inflection, then the silent 'alif is deleted.²³

لاحظوا.	كانوا كذلك.	حملوها على ظهورهم.
laaHaZ-uu.	kaan-uu ka-dhaalika.	Hamal-uu-haa 'alaa Zuhuur-i-him.
They noticed.	They were like that.	They carried it on their backs.

4.2.1.4 "DAGGER" 'alif: 'alif qasiira **ألف قصيرة**: This form of 'alif is a spelling convention used only with certain words. It is a reduced version of 'alif Tawiila written **above** the consonant (hanging above it rather like a dagger), rather than beside it in the body of the word. As with the short vowels written above or below the word, this form of 'alif is not normally visible in ordinary text. It is therefore necessary to know that a word is spelled with 'alif qaSiira in order to pronounce it correctly. The words spelled with 'alif qaSiira are not many in number, but some of them are used with great frequency. The most common ones include:

God	allaah ' الله	الله
god	'ilaah إله	إله
this (m.)	haadha هذا	هذا
this (f.)	haadhihi هذه	هذه
these	haa'ulaa'i هؤلاء	هؤلاء
that (m.)	dhaalika ذلك	ذلك
thus	haakadhaa هكذا	هكذا
but	laakinna لكن	لكن

4.1.2.4 'alif maqSuura **ألف مقصورة**: The 'alif maqSuura looks like a yaa' without dots. This form of 'alif occurs only at the end of a word. It is a spelling convention occurring with certain words because of their derivational etymology. Sometimes a dagger 'alif is added above the 'alif maqSuura to distinguish it from a final yaa'. Some words spelled with 'alif maqSuura are proper names, such as:

Leila	laylaa	لَيْلَى	Moses	muusaa	مُوسَى
Mona	munaa	مُنَى	Mustafa	muSTafaa	مُصْطَفَى

²³ This 'alif is called 'alif al-faaSila or "separating 'alif." It is also sometimes referred to as "otiose 'alif."

Other words ending in *ʿalif maqSuura* may be any form class: verb, preposition, noun, adjective:

he built	<i>banaa</i>	بَنَى	piety	<i>taqwaa</i>	تَقَوَّى
upon	<i>ʿalaa</i>	عَلَى	greatest (f.)	<i>kubraa</i>	كُبِّرَى
to, toward	<i>ʿilaa</i>	إِلَى			

Sometimes, in an indefinite noun or adjective, the *ʿalif maqSuura* is a seat for the indefinite accusative marker, *fatHataan*, and the word is pronounced with an /-an / ending instead of -aa. This depends on the word's etymology. For declension and more examples of these words, see Chapter 7 on noun inflections.

hospital	<i>mustashfan</i>	مُسْتَشْفَى
echo	<i>Sadan</i>	صَدَى
coffeehouse	<i>maqhan</i>	مَقْهَى

Most words spelled with final *ʿalif maqSuura* have to change it to *ʿalif Tawiila* if the word receives a suffix and the *ʿalif* is no longer final:

مُسْتَوَى	مُسْتَوَاهُ	قُرَى	قُرَانَا	رَمَى	رَمَاهَا
<i>mustawan</i>	<i>mustawaa-hu</i>	<i>quran</i>	<i>quraa-naa</i>	<i>ramaa</i>	<i>ramaa-haa</i>
level, status	his status	villages	our villages	he threw	he threw it (f.)

Certain function words spelled with *ʿalif maqSuura* shift from *ʿalif* to a diphthongized *yaaʿ* when they receive pronoun suffixes:²⁴

لَدَى	لَدَيْهَا	إِلَى	إِلَيْهِمْ	عَلَى	عَلَيْكُمْ
<i>ladaa</i>	<i>laday-haa</i> ²⁵	<i>ʿilaa</i>	<i>ʿilay-him</i>	<i>ʿalaa</i>	<i>ʿalay-kum</i>
with, at	with her	to, toward	to them (m.)	on, upon	upon you (pl.)

4.2.2 Semivowels/semi-consonants *waaw* and *yaaʿ*

The letters *waaw* and *yaaʿ* have two functions. They represent the consonant sounds /w/ and /y/, respectively, and they also represent the long vowels /uu/ and /ii/. English has something similar to this because the letter “y” can act as a consonant, as in the word “yellow” or it can act as a vowel, as in the word “sky.”²⁶ The Arabic /ii/ sound symbolized by *yaaʿ* is like the /i/ in English “machine.” The /uu/ sound symbolized by *waaw* is like the /u/ in “rule.”

²⁴ For rules and full paradigms of these prepositions, see Chapter 16 on prepositions and prepositional phrases.

²⁵ This particle also has the sense of possession: ‘she has.’

²⁶ See note 1.

4.2.2.1 THE SOUNDS OF *waaw*: The letter *waaw* represents either the sound of /w/ or the long vowel /uu/. For example, in the following words, it is /w/:

boy	walad	وَلَدَ	state	wilaaya	وَلَايَة
season	mawsim	مَوْسِمَ	first	ʿawwal	أَوَّلَ

And in the following it is /uu/:

breakfast	faTuur	فَطُورَ	entry	duxuul	دُخُولَ
light	nuur	نورَ	forbidden	mamnuuʿ	مَمْنُوعَ

4.2.2.2 THE SOUNDS OF *yaaʿ*: The letter *yaaʿ* represents either the sound of /y/ as in “young” or the long vowel /ii/ as the “i” in “petite.” For example, in the following words it is /y/:

Yemen	yaman	يَمَنَ
white	ʿabyaD	أَبْيَضَ
day	yawm	يَوْمَ

In the following words it is pronounced as /ii/:

elephant	fiil	فِيلَ
dune	kathiib	كُتَيْبَ
religion	diin	دِينَ

4.3 Short vowels and *sukuun* (al-Harakaat wa l-sukuun الحَرَكَاتُ وَالسُّكُونُ)

The set of three short vowels consists of the sounds /a/, /i/, and /u/. They are not considered part of the Arabic alphabet and are not as a rule visible in written Arabic. The short vowels are referred to in Arabic not as letters (*Huruuf*) but as “movements” (*Harakaat*). That is, they are seen as a way of moving the voice from one consonant to another.

Short vowels can be written into a text, but ordinarily they are not. Two exceptions to this are the Qurʾān and children’s schoolbooks. In the Qurʾān, the short vowels are made explicit so that readers and reciters can be absolutely certain of the correct pronunciation of the sacred text. In schoolbooks, they are inserted so that children can study and master word structure and spelling as they learn how to read MSA. As reading skill progresses, the use of short vowels in pedagogical texts is phased out. This is done because the patterning of short vowels is largely predictable and therefore marking them is considered redundant.

For learners of Arabic as a foreign language, the absence of short vowels requires extra attention to word structure and morphological patterning, and

memorization of the exact sound of the word as well as its spelling. Just because the vowels are invisible doesn't mean they don't exist.

4.3.1 *fatHa*: فَتْحَة short /a/

The short vowel /a/, called *fatHa*, ranges in pronunciation from low central (as in “dark”) to lowered mid front (as in “best”), depending on context. The short vowel /a/ is represented, when written, by a small diagonal mark sloping downward to the left (َ). It is placed *above* the consonant that it follows in pronunciation. Examples:

country	<i>balad</i>	بَلَدَ
she danced	<i>raqaSat</i>	رَقَصَتْ
mint	<i>na^cna^c</i>	نَعْنَعَ

4.3.2 *kasra* : كَسْرَة short /i/

The short vowel /i/, called *kasra*, ranges in pronunciation from a high front vowel (as in “petite”) to a lower front vowel (as in “sit”). *Kasra* is represented by a mark similar to *fatHa*, but is written **underneath** the consonant it follows (ِ). Examples:

pepper	<i>filfil</i>	فِلْفِلِ
skin	<i>jild</i>	جِلْدِ
apricots	<i>mishmish</i>	مِشْمِشِ

4.3.3 *Damma*: ضَمَّة short /u/

The short /u/ sound in Arabic, called *Damma*, ranges from a high back vowel (as in “duke”) to a lower rounded back vowel (as in “bull”). The *Damma* is represented by what looks like a small *waaw*, or an English apostrophe (ُ). It is written **above** the consonant which it follows. Examples:

cities	<i>mudun</i>	مُدُنُ
ear	<i>ʿudhun</i>	أُذُنُ
quarter	<i>rub^c</i>	رُبْعُ

4.3.4 Absence of vowel: *sukuun* سُكُون

A consonant is not always followed by a vowel. Sometimes one consonant comes immediately after another, or a consonant will end a word. In order to indicate clearly that a consonant is not followed by a vowel, Arabic uses a diacritical mark called a *sukuun* (‘silence’) which looks like a mini-zero (ْ) placed directly above the consonant.

As with the short vowel indicators, the *sukuun* is invisible in ordinary script. It is shown here in the following examples:

room	ghurfa	غُرْفَةٌ	we drink	nashrab	نَشْرَبُ
temple	ma ^c bad	مَعْبَدٌ	sand	raml	رَمْلٌ

4.3.5 Extra short or helping vowels

An epenthetic or helping vowel may be inserted at the end of a word in context in order to prevent consonant clusters and facilitate smoothness of pronunciation within a sentence. In a sentence, these helping vowels are added to words that would otherwise end with *sukuun* when the following word begins with a consonant cluster. The determination of the helping vowel is as follows:

4.3.5.1 HELPING VOWEL *kasra*: The short vowel *kasra* is by far the most frequent helping vowel.

نَشَرَتِ الْجَرِيدَةُ الْاَخْبَارَ.	هَلْ اِنْتَهَى الْمُؤْتَمَرُ؟
nasharat-i l-jariidat-u l- ^o axbaar-a.	hal-i ntahaa l-mu ^o tamar-u?
The newspaper published the news.	Did the conference end?

4.3.5.2 HELPING VOWEL *Damma*: The helping vowel *Damma* is used with the second person plural personal pronouns and third person plural pronouns when they are spelled with *Damma*:

اِسْتَقْبَلَتْهُمُ الْبَعْثَةُ الرَّسْمِيَّةُ.
istaqbal-at-hum-u l-bi ^c that-u l-rasmiyyat-u.
The official delegation met them.

يَعْتَبِرُونَكُمْ الرُّوَادَ.
ya- ^c tabir-uuna-kum-u l-ruwwaad-a. ²⁷
They consider you (m. pl.) the pioneers.

هَلْ اشْتَرَيْتُمُ الطَّعَامَ؟
hal-i shtaray-tum-u l-Ta ^c aam-a? ²⁸
Did you (m. pl.) buy the food?

²⁷ Phonetically, ya-^ctabir-u-kum-u r-ruwwaad-a.

²⁸ Phonetically, hal-i shtaray-tum-u T-Ta^caam-a? There are two helping vowels here, a *kasra* on the question-word *hal* in order to prevent a consonant cluster with the past tense Form VIII verb, and *Damma* after the subject marker *-tum* affixed to the past tense verb.

4.3.5.3 LONG VOWEL *waaw* AS HELPING VOWEL: A special case of a **long helping vowel /uu/** occurs when the object of the verb following the second person masculine plural past tense suffix *-tum/* happens to be a pronoun. A long */uu/* is inserted as a buffer between the subject marker on the verb and the object pronoun:

هَلْ نَشَرْتُمُوهَا ؟

hal nashar-tum-uu-haa?

Did you (m. pl.) publish it?

4.3.5.4 HELPING VOWEL *fatHa*: The short vowel *fatHa* has restricted use as a helping vowel. With the word *min* ‘from,’ the helping vowel is *fatHa* before the definite article and otherwise, *kasra*.

مِنَ الْكُوَيْتِ

min-a l-kuwayt-i

from Kuwait

مِنَ الْغَرْبِ

min-a l-gharb-i

from the west

مِنَ انْتِهَاءِ الْحَرْبِ

min-i ntihaa²⁹-i l-Harb-i

from the end of the war

مِنَ اسْمِنَا

min-i sm-i-naa

from our name

4.4 Diphthongs and glides

Diphthongs or glides in Arabic are combinations of short vowels and semivowels. The sequences that occur are */aw/*, */ay/*, */iy/*, and */uw/*. The sequences **iw/* and **uy/* are usually prohibited.

4.4.1 Diphthongs

4.4.1.1 */aw/* (PRONOUNCED LIKE THE “ow” IN “power”)²⁹

above

fawqa

فَوْقَ

almonds

lawz

لَوْزَ

pine-nuts

Sanawbar

صَنْوَبَرٍ

appointment

maw^cid

مَوْعِدٍ

4.4.1.2 */ay/* (PRONOUNCED LIKE ENGLISH “eye,” OR “aye”)³⁰

egg

bayDa

بَيْضَةً

car

sayyaara

سَيَّارَةً

to change

ghayyar

غَيَّرَ

night

layl

لَيْلٍ

²⁹ In less formal spoken Arabic and in colloquial Arabic the diphthong */aw/* changes to a long vowel */oo/*, pronounced like the */o/* in “note.”

³⁰ Again, in less formal Arabic and colloquial Arabic, the diphthong */ay/* changes to the long vowel */ee/*, pronounced like the long */a/* in “date.”

4.4.2 Glides

Glides are vowel-consonant combinations where the vowel and consonant have very close points of articulation, such as /iy/ (high front vowel plus palatal sonant) and /uw/ (high back vowel plus rounded bilabial sonant). In most cases the glide consonant is doubled.

4.4.2.1 HIGH FRONT GLIDE /iy/:

Arab (f.)	^ʿ arabiyya	عَرَبِيَّةٌ	Egyptians	miSriyy-uun	مِصْرِيَّونَ
denied	manfiyy	مَنْفِيٌّ	yearly	sanawiyy-an	سَنَوِيًّا

4.4.2.2 HIGH BACK GLIDE /uw/:

growth	numuww	نُمُوٌّ	enemy	^ʿ aduww	عَدُوٌّ
youth	futuwwa	فُتُوَّةٌ	height	^ʿ uluww	عُلُوٌّ

5 MSA pronunciation styles: full form and pause form

When reading MSA formally, aloud, words are pronounced according to certain rules.

5.1 Full form

When complete vowelizing is observed, all vowels are pronounced, including all the short vowels that are contained in the words but not visible in the text. This also includes any word-final inflectional vowels and is called “full” form pronunciation.

حَضَرَ رَأْسُ الْجُمْهُورِيَّةِ إِلَى الْعَاصِمَةِ لَيْلَةَ أَمْسٍ.

HaDar-a ra^ʔiis-u l-jumhuuriyyat-i ^ʔilaa l-^ʿaaSimat-i laylat-a ^ʔams-i.

The president of the republic came to the capital last night.

5.2 Pause form

There is also a standard Arabic pronunciation principle that a word-final short vowel may be left unpronounced. This is called “pause form” in English and *waqf* وَقَفْ (‘stopping’) in Arabic. There are two variants of this principle:

5.2.1 Formal pause form

When reading MSA aloud, the standard practice is to use pause form on the final word of a sentence, or (if it is a long sentence) wherever there is a natural “pause” for breath.

حَضَرَ رَئِيسُ الْجُمْهُورِيَّةِ إِلَى الْعَاصِمَةِ لَيْلَةَ أَمْسٍ.

HaDar-a ra³iis-u l-jumhuuriyyat-i ³ilaa l-^caaSimat-i laylat-a ³ams.³¹

The president of the republic came to the capital last night.

5.2.2 Informal pause form:

When reading MSA aloud or when speaking MSA less formally, pause form is sometimes used on most or all words ending with a short vowel.

حَضَرَ رَئِيسُ الْجُمْهُورِيَّةِ إِلَى الْعَاصِمَةِ لَيْلَةَ أَمْسٍ.

HaDar ra³iis l-jumhuuriyya ³ilaa l-^caaSima laylat ³ams.³²

The president of the Republic came to the capital last night.

5.2.2.1 PAUSE FORM FOR WORDS ENDING IN *taa'* *marbuuTa*: A word that terminates in *taa'* *marbuuTa* is usually pronounced as ending in *-a* or *-ah* in pause form unless it is the first term of an *'iDaafa*, in which case it is pronounced as a */-t/* sound.

capital	^c aaSima	عَاصِمَة
university	jaami ^c a	جَامِعَة
organization	munaZZama ³³	مُنَظَّمَة

عَاصِمَة عُمان	جَامِعَة بَيْرُوت
^c aaSimat ^c umaan	jaami ^c at bayruut
the capital of Oman	the university of Beirut

6 MSA syllable structure

There are a limited number of possible syllable sequences for MSA word structure.

First of all, no word or syllable may start with a vowel. If a word appears to start with a vowel, such as *'islaam* or *'umma* or *'abadan*, what is actually heard is a vowel preceded by a glottal stop (*hamza*). English speakers tend not to hear the glottal stop because it is not phonemic (meaningful) in English. It is, however, a real consonant in Arabic.

I	³ anaa	أَنَا
week	³ usbuu ^c	أُسْبُوع
if	³ idhaa	إِذَا

³¹ Final short vowel */-i/* is unpronounced.

³² Note that in order to avoid consonant clusters and ease pronunciation, when speaking in pause form, sometimes helping vowels have to be inserted.

³³ For a more detailed description of *taa'* *marbuuTa* pronunciation, see McCarus and Rammuny 1974, 112–13. See also section 1.2 of Chapter 7, on feminine gender marking.

The second rule is that no word or syllable may begin with a consonant cluster, such as /sk/ or /br/. Consonant clusters within syllables are prohibited, except for one situation: In pause form, a word may end in a consonant cluster, such as: *fahimt* 'I understood' فَهَمْتُ or *ista'malt* 'I used' اسْتَعْمَلْتُ. Syllable structure in MSA is therefore limited to the following five combinations of consonants and vowels.

6.1 Full form pronunciation syllables

- (1) "Short" or "weak" syllable: CV (consonant–short vowel)
e.g., -ma, -bi, -hu
- (2) "Long" or "strong" syllables: CVV (consonant–long vowel)
or CVC (consonant–short vowel–consonant)
e.g., -faa, -dii, -ras, -tab

6.2 Additional pause form pronunciation syllables

- (1) "Super-strong" syllables: CVVC (consonant–long vowel–consonant)
or CVCC (consonant–short vowel–consonant–consonant)
e.g., -riim, -nuun, -sart, -rabt

These super-strong sequences occur primarily in word-final position.³⁴

7 Word stress rules

Stress rules refer to the placement of stress or emphasis (loudness) within a word. In English, stress is not fully predictable and is learned by ear or along with word spelling. Some words in English are differentiated only by stress, for example: invalid (noun and adjective), present (noun, adjective, and verb), suspect (noun and verb), conduct (noun and verb).

Stress in Modern Standard Arabic, on the other hand, is essentially predictable and adheres to some general rules based on syllable structure. Because MSA is not a spontaneously spoken language, the rules given here for stress patterns are for the way MSA is pronounced when read out loud or used in speaking from prepared texts in the Eastern Arab world. In Egypt and the Sudan, stress rules are different for MSA as well as the colloquial language. Nonetheless, the standard Eastern form is "a nearly universal norm," acceptable and understandable throughout the Arab world.³⁵

³⁴ Active participles of geminate Form I verbs contain an internal CVVC sequence, for example, حَاجْ *Haajj* 'pilgrim,' مَادَّةْ *maadda* 'substance,' كَافَّةْ *kaaffa* 'entirety,' سَامْ *saamm* 'poisonous,' جَافْ *jaaff* 'dry,' عَامْ *aamm* 'public; general,' خَاصْ *xaass* 'private; special,' or حَارْ *Haarr* 'hot.' Some borrowed words also contain this sequence, such as رَادِيُو *raad-yuu* 'radio.' See Chapter 6 on participles, section 1.1.2.

³⁵ McCarthy and Prince 1990a, 252. They also note that "there is inconsistency in the stressing of standard Arabic words between different areas of the Arab world, and no direct testimony on this subject exists from the Classical period."

Different sets of rules are used for full form pronunciation and pause form pronunciation. They overlap to a great extent, but there are some differences. The major feature of all these stress rules is that **stress placement is calculated from the end of a word** – not the beginning. Note that some Arabic words are composed of several morphological elements, including case endings and pronoun suffixes of various sorts, so that the length of words may vary substantially.

7.1 Full form stress rules

7.1.1 Stress is never on the final syllable

Therefore, in words of two syllables, stress is on the first, no matter what that first syllable is like (strong or weak). Examples (stress is indicated by **boldface**):

to, towards	<i>ʿilaa</i>	إِلَى	we	naHnu	نَحْنُ
what	maadh aa	مَاذَا	they visited	zaaru u	زَارُوا
she	hi ya	هِيَ	here	hu naa	هُنَا

7.1.2 Stress on penult

Stress is on the second syllable from the end of the word (the penult) if that syllable is strong (CVC or CVV). Examples:

efforts (nom.)	<i>juhuu</i> dun	جُهُودٌ
students (acc.)	<i>Tulla</i> aban	طُلَّابًا
they taught her	<i>darrasu</i> uhaa	دَرَّسُوهَا
they (f.) write	<i>yaktub</i> na	يَكْتُبْنَ
you (m. pl.) worked	<i>ʿamil</i> tum	عَمِلْتُمْ

7.1.3 Stress on the antepenult

If the second syllable from the end of the word is weak (CV), then the stress falls back to the third syllable from the end (the antepenult):

a capital	<i>ʿaa</i> Si matun	عَاصِمَةٌ
all of us	kull unaa	كُلُّنَا
a library (nom.)	<i>mak</i> tabatun	مَكْتَبَةٌ
he tries	<i>yu</i> Ha awilu	يُحَاوِلُ
Palestinian (f.)	<i>fi</i> la sTi iniyyatun	فِلَسْطِينِيَّةٌ

7.1.4 Summary: word length

Therefore, in full-form pronunciation, MSA stress falls either on the second or third syllable from the end of the word. Note that if a suffix is attached to a word, it increases the number of syllables and may change the stress pattern, e.g.,

university	<i>jaami^catun</i>	جَامِعَةٌ
our university	<i>jaami^catunaa</i>	جَامِعَتُنَا
office	<i>maktabun</i>	مَكْتَبٌ
his office	<i>maktabuhu</i>	مَكْتَبُهُ
we studied	<i>darasnaa</i>	دَرَسْنَا
we studied it (f.)	<i>darasnaahaa</i>	دَرَسْنَاهَا

7.2 Pause form stress rule

The same basic set of rules applies to pause form, but there is an important additional rule for pause form pronunciation: Stress falls on the final syllable of a word if that syllable is a super-strong one (CVCC or CVVC).

minister	<i>waziir</i>	وَزِيرٌ	discussions	<i>mubaaHathaata</i>	مُبَاحَثَاتٌ
boundaries	<i>Huduud</i>	حُدُودٌ	I tried	<i>Haawalt</i>	حَاوَلْتُ

7.2.1 Summary

To summarize, MSA stress falls on either the second or the third syllable from the end of the word or, in pause form, on the final syllable if it is super-strong.³⁶

7.2.2 Other pause form conventions

7.2.2.1 PAUSE FORM *nisba*: Words in pause form that end with the *nisba* (relative adjective) suffix *-iyy* should technically have stress placed on that final syllable (CVCC), e.g.,

Yemeni	<i>yamaniyy</i>	يَمَنِيٌّ	official	<i>ra^oiisiyy</i>	رَأْسِيٌّ
Arab	<i>arabiyy</i>	عَرَبِيٌّ	Bedouin	<i>badawiyy</i>	بَدَوِيٌّ

And this is done in very formal spoken MSA. However, it is often the case in spoken MSA (as in colloquial Arabic) that this ending is treated not as *-iyy* but simply

³⁶ As McCarthy and Prince concisely note: "The stress system is obviously weight-sensitive: final syllables are stressed if superheavy CvcC or CvCC; penults are stressed if heavy Cvv or CvC; otherwise the antepenult is stressed" (1990a, 252).

as long *ii*, in which case the stress is placed as though the last syllable contained an open long vowel:

Yemeni	<i>yamanii</i>	يَمَنِي	official	<i>ra'isii</i>	رَئِيسِي
Arab	<i>'arabii</i>	عَرَبِي	Bedouin	<i>badawii</i>	بَدَوِي

7.2.2.2 PAUSE FORM CHANGE IN STRESS FOR CERTAIN WORDS SPELLED WITH *taa'*

***marbuuTa*:** In pause form, *taa'* *marbuuTa*, along with its case ending, is not pronounced, and this eliminates a syllable from the word. Therefore, stress has to be recalculated, and certain words spelled with *taa'* *marbuuTa* shift the stress when pronounced in pause form.

	Full form (includes case ending)	Pause form
university	<i>jaami'at-un</i>	<i>jaami'a</i> جَامِعَة
school	<i>madrasat-un</i>	<i>madrasa</i> مَدْرَسَة
lecture	<i>muHaaDarat-un</i>	<i>muHaaDara</i> مُحَاضَرَة

The shift in stress in the above examples occurs because when the *taa'* *marbuuTa* plus case ending is deleted, the third syllable from the end becomes the second syllable from the end, and because it is weak (CV), it cannot receive the stress, so the stress shifts back to the previous syllable. There are also cases where the deletion of *taa'* *marbuuTa* plus case ending does not alter the stress pattern. This happens if the syllable that originally had the stress is a strong syllable. In this case the strong syllable retains the stress, in keeping with the general rules.³⁷

	Full form	Pause form
city	<i>madiinat-un</i>	<i>madiina</i> مَدِينَة
dove	<i>Hamaamat-un</i>	<i>Hamaama</i> حَمَامَة
heroism	<i>buTuulat-un</i>	<i>buTuula</i> بَطُولَة

³⁷ For additional reading on Arabic word stress and generative phonology, see Brame 1970 and Abdo 1969.

8 Definiteness and indefiniteness markers

8.1 Definite article *al/-* الـ

8.1.1 Spelling

The definite article in Arabic is spelled with *ʾalif-laam* and is attached as a prefix. This spelling convention makes a word with the prefixed definite article look like just one word. The definite article thus never occurs independently (*al-* الـ). It is a proclitic particle, i.e., always attached to a word – either a noun or an adjective.

the sheikh	<i>al-shaykh</i>	الشَّيْخُ	the night	<i>al-layla</i>	الَّيْلَةُ
the genie	<i>al-jinnii</i>	الْجِنِّي	the women	<i>al-nisaa'</i>	النِّسَاءُ

8.1.2 Pronunciation

In general, the definite article is pronounced “*al*” but many speakers shorten the */a/* sound so that it sounds more like “*el*” (as in English “elbow”). It is spelled with elidable *hamza* (*hamzat al-waSl*) (see above), so if the definite article is not utterance-initial, the *hamza* drops out in pronunciation and the vowel pronounced with the *laam* of the definite article is actually the final vowel of the preceding word (see also above under *hamzat al-waSl*).

8.1.2.1 SUN AND MOON LETTERS

- (1) Sun Letters (*Huruuf shamsiyya* حُرُوف شَمْسِيَّة): Certain sounds assimilate or absorb the sound of the *laam* in the definite article. These sounds or letters are called “sun letters” (*Huruuf shamsiyya*). When a word begins with one of these sounds, the *ʾalif-laam* of the definite article is written, but the *laam* is not pronounced; instead, it is absorbed or assimilated into the first letter or sound in the word and that letter is doubled in strength. A *shadda* is written over the sun letter itself to show that the */l/* is assimilated into it and strengthens it, but the *shadda* does not show in normal printed Arabic.

The sun letters or sounds that absorb the */l/* of the definite article are as follows:

ت ث د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ل ن

taaʾ, thaaʾ, daal, dhaal, raaʾ, zaay, siin, shiin, Saad, Daad, Taaʾ, Zaaʾ, laam, nuun

English	Pronounced	Arabic
the commerce	<i>at-tijaara</i>	التِّجَارَةُ
the culture	<i>ath-thaqaafa</i>	الثَّقَافَةُ

English	Pronounced	Arabic
the religion	<i>ad-diin</i>	الدِّين
the gold	<i>adh-dhahab</i>	الذَّهَب
the lord	<i>ar-rabb</i>	الرَّبِّ
the flowers	<i>az-zuhuur</i>	الزُّهُور
the secret	<i>as-sirr</i>	السِّرِّ
the sun	<i>ash-shams</i>	الشَّمْس
the wool	<i>aS-Suuf</i>	الصَّوْف
the noise	<i>aD-Dajja</i>	الضَّجَّة
the doctor	<i>aT-Tabiib</i>	الطَّبِّيب
the shadow	<i>aZ-Zill</i>	الظِّلِّ
the clothing	<i>al-libaas</i>	اللبَّاس
the light	<i>an-nuur</i>	النُّور

- (2) Moon letters (*Huruuf qamariyya* حُرُوف قَمَرِيَّة): “Moon letters” do not absorb the /l/ of the definite article. The moon letters are:

أ ب ج ح خ ع غ ف ق ك م ه و ي

hamza, baa', jiim, Haa', xaa', 'ayn, ghayn, faa', qaaf, kaaf, miim, haa', waaw, yaa'

English	Pronounced	Arabic
Islam	<i>al-'islaam</i>	الإِسْلَام
the bedouin	<i>al-badw</i>	الْبَدَو
the pocket	<i>al-jayb</i>	الْجَيْب

English	Pronounced	Arabic
the luck	<i>al-HaZZ</i>	الْحَظُّ
the mustard	<i>al-xardal</i>	الْخَرْدَلُ
the Arabs	<i>al-‘arab</i>	الْعَرَبُ
the west	<i>al-gharb</i>	الْغَرْبُ
the pepper	<i>al-filfil</i>	الْفِلْفِلُ
the moon	<i>al-qamar</i>	الْقَمَرُ
the treasure	<i>al-kanz</i>	الْكَنْزُ
the center	<i>al-markaz</i>	الْمَرْكَزُ
the engineering	<i>al-handasa</i>	الْهَنْدَسَةُ
the ministry	<i>al-wizaara</i>	الْوِزَارَةُ
the hand	<i>al-yad</i>	الْيَدُ

8.1.2.2 SUMMARY: SUN AND MOON LETTERS: The Arabic alphabet, or inventory of consonant sounds, is therefore divided into two groups: sounds that assimilate the /l/ of the definite article and sounds that do not. The sounds are best learned through memorization, listening, and speaking practice. Note that in many transliteration systems (Library of Congress, for example), when written Arabic is romanized into Latin letters, the definite article is spelled “al” even though in pronunciation the /l/ may be assimilated. That is the case in the romanization in this text.

8.2 Indefinite marker: nutation (*tanwiin* تَنْوِين)

Indefiniteness, which corresponds to the use of “a” or “an” in English, is not marked with a separate word in Arabic. Instead, it is marked with a suffix, an /n/ sound that comes at the **end** of a word. This /n/ sound is not written with a regular letter /nuun/. It is indicated by writing the final inflectional vowel on a word twice. In the case of *Damma*, nutation is often indicated by giving the *Damma* a “tail” or flourish at the end, rather than doubling it.³⁸

³⁸ The writing conventions for this indefinite marking are described in detail in Chapter 7, section 4.2.1.

Nunation as a marker of indefiniteness may appear on nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Certain classes of words (e.g., diptotes) are restricted from having nunation.

a house (nominative)	<i>bayt-u-n</i>	بَيْتٌ
a house (genitive)	<i>bayt-i-n</i>	بَيْتٍ
a house (accusative)	<i>bayt-a-n</i>	بَيْتًا

Note that the accusative form of nunation often needs a “seat” or “chair” which is usually *ʾalif Tawiila*.³⁹ For example:

place	<i>makaan-an</i>	مَكَانًا
bridge	<i>jisr-an</i>	جِسْرًا
many	<i>kathiir-an</i>	كَثِيرًا

In words spelled with *taaʾ marbuuTa*, the nunation sits atop the final letter and the accusative nunation does not require an *ʾalif* chair. This is also the case in words that end with *hamza* preceded by a long vowel.

an embassy (nominative)	<i>sifaarat-u-n</i>	سِفَارَةٌ
an embassy (genitive)	<i>sifaarat-i-n</i>	سِفَارَةٍ
an embassy (accusative)	<i>sifaarat-a-n</i>	سِفَارَةً
an evening (nominative)	<i>masaaʾ-u-n</i>	مَسَاءٌ
an evening (genitive)	<i>masaaʾ-i-n</i>	مَسَاءٍ
an evening (accusative)	<i>masaaʾ-a-n</i>	مَسَاءً

³⁹ Certain “defective” nouns use *ʾalif maqSuura* as a seat for the *fatHataan* in both the nominative and the accusative cases, e.g., *maʿnan* ‘meaning’ or *maqhan* ‘coffeehouse.’ See section 5.4.4 of Chapter 7 for further details of this declension.

Arabic word structure: an overview

“The Semitic root is one of the great miracles of man’s language.”¹

1 Morphology in general

Morphology, or word structure, pertains to the organization, rules, and processes concerning meaningful units of language, whether they be words themselves or parts of words, such as affixes of various sorts. Meaningful components and subcomponents at the word level are referred to as morphemes.² Arabic morphology is different from English in some very basic respects but it is highly systematic. In fact, Arabic and the Semitic languages have had substantial influence on the development of certain key concepts in theoretical morphology.³

Theories of word structure, or morphology, usually focus on two essential issues: how words are formed (**derivational or lexical morphology**) and how they interact with syntax (**inflectional morphology**, e.g., marking for categories such as gender, number, case, tense). Arab grammarians, starting in the late eighth and early ninth centuries AD, developed sophisticated analyses of Arabic morphology that differ from modern Western theories, but interrelate with them in interesting ways.⁴ Because this reference grammar is intended primarily for the use of Western readers, it is organized along the lines of traditional Western categories, with inclusion of the Arabic terminology.

Derivational or lexical morphology has to do with principles governing word formation (such as analysis of the English words “truthful” or “untruthfulness”

¹ Lohmann 1972, 318.

² Aronoff (1976, 7) gives this general definition of morphemes: “the units into which words are analyzed and out of which they are composed.” This definition is adequate as a start, although Aronoff notes that it is problematic in certain ways for morphological theory. For a general introduction to traditional morphology a good place to begin is Matthews 1974. He writes: “the morpheme is established as the single minimal or primitive unit of grammar, the ultimate basis for our entire description of the primary articulation of language. Words, phrases, etc., are all seen as larger, complex or non-primitive units which are built up from morphemes in successive stages” (1974, 78). For further developments in morphological theory see Aronoff 1976 and 1994, Anderson 1992, and Spencer 1991.

³ “It may thus well be that all Western linguistic morphology is directly rooted in the Semitic grammatical tradition” (Aronoff 1994, 3).

⁴ For discussion of how Arabic morphological categories interrelate with Western theories, see Ryding 1993. See also discussions in Aronoff 1994, esp. 123–64 and Anderson 1992, 57–58; Monteil (1960, 105–223) has an excellent overview of MSA morphological issues.

derived from the base word “true”).⁵ **Inflectional morphology** describes how words vary or inflect in order to express grammatical contrasts or categories, such as singular/plural or past/present tense. Derivation, since it is the process of creating words or lexical units, is considered procedurally prior to inflection, which subsequently acts upon the word stem and modifies it, if necessary, for use in context (by affixing /-s/ in English for plural, for example, or /-ed/ for past tense). These are two fundamental categories, therefore, in approaching language structure. However, the boundaries between derivation and inflection are not as clear-cut in Arabic as they are in English because Arabic morphology works on different principles, and because Arabic morphological theory views elements of word structure and sentence structure from a different perspective.⁶

Readers who are consulting this reference grammar for answers to specific questions may want to skip over the morphological theory and consult the paradigms (inflectional charts), and the book is designed to allow them to do so. However, those who are studying Arabic with goals of understanding the processes and categories of Arabic language structure will find that descriptions of the morphological structure are helpful not only in understanding the theoretical framework of Arabic, but also in organizing their knowledge in order to serve as a foundation for higher levels of achievement and proficiency. Moreover, without a sound grasp of Arabic morphological principles, learners will be unable to make use of Arabic dictionaries.

2 Derivation: the Arabic root-pattern system

Arabic morphology exhibits rigorous and elegant logic. It differs from that of English or other Indo-European languages because it is to a large extent based on **discontinuous** morphemes. It consists primarily of a system of consonant **roots** which interlock with **patterns** of vowels (and sometimes certain other consonants) to form words, or word stems. This type of operation is not unknown in English. If one looks at the consonant sequence s-ng, one knows that its meaning

⁵ In the word “untruthfulness,” for example, there are four morphemes: un-, truth-, -ful, and -ness. Three of these morphemes are bound, i.e., they cannot occur on their own, and one (“truth”) is “free.”

⁶ The two major categories of grammatical analysis in Arabic are *Sarf* صرف and *naHw* نحو, which are often translated as morphology and syntax, respectively. However, the boundary between them is not the same boundary as in Western grammatical theory. The category of *Sarf* covers many areas of derivational morphology (e.g., the ten forms of the verb) and some inflectional morphology (e.g., the past tense paradigm); but it does not include the study of case and mood. A further category of Arabic grammatical analysis, *ishtiqaaq*, is often translated as ‘etymology’ but actually deals more with Arabic derivational morphology. It is etymology (the study of word origins and development) in the sense that it deals extensively with the creation of words from the lexical root system, but not in the Western diachronic sense that examines the evolution of lexical items and their meanings over time and through different, though related stages of language evolution.

has to do with vocal music. By inserting different vowels into the vowel slot between the /s/ and the /-ng/ several different English words can be formed:

sing	(v.)
sang	(v.)
sung	(v.)
song	(n.)

All of these items are words, or stems that can have suffixes such as “sing-ing,” “song-s,” “sing-s,” “song-’s,” “sing-er,” or prefixes, such as “un-sung.” As a comparison, the consonant sequence *s-ng* corresponds roughly to the concept of an Arabic consonantal **root**, whereas the vowels and affixes would correspond approximately to the Arabic concept of **pattern**. The procedure of differentiating meaning by means of word-internal vowel change is known technically as “ablaut” or “introflexion,” defined as a word-internal change that signals a grammatical change. Other examples in English include: man/men, foot/feet, mouse/mice, know/knew, sink/sank/sunk. In English, the change usually involves just one vowel; however, in Arabic, it can involve several, for example:

he wrote	<i>katab-a</i> (v.)	كَتَبَ
he corresponded	<i>kaatab-a</i> (v.)	كَاتَبَ
it was written	<i>kutib-a</i> (v.)	كُتِبَ
book	<i>kitaab</i> (n.)	كِتَاب
books	<i>kutub</i> (n.)	كُتُب
writer; (adj.) writing	<i>kaatib</i> (n.)	كَاتِب
writers	<i>kuttaab</i> (n.)	كُتَّاب
write! (2 m.s.)	<i>uktub!</i> (v.)	اُكْتُبْ!

These words, or stems, can have inflectional suffixes such as *katab-at* ‘she wrote,’ or *kutub-an* ‘books’ (accusative case). The root or three-consonant ordered sequence *k-t-b* has to do with “writing,” and most words in the Arabic language that have to do with writing are derived from that root, through modifying patterns of vowels (and sometimes also adding certain consonants). This is a typically Semitic morphological system. In Arabic, this **root-pattern** process has evolved extensively and very productively in order to cover a vast array of meanings associated with each semantic field (such as “writing”). A few more examples:

office; desk	<i>maktab</i> (n.)	مَكْتَب
offices; desks	<i>makaatib</i> (n.)	مَكَاتِب

library	<i>maktaba</i> (n.)	مَكْتَبَة
she writes	<i>ta-ktub-u</i> (v.)	تَكْتُبُ
we write	<i>na-ktub-u</i> (v.)	نَكْتُبُ
writing	<i>kitaaba</i> (n.)	كِتَابَة
written	<i>maktuub</i> (PP)	مَكْتُوب

As seen in the above examples, the shifting of **patterns** around the consonantal **root** accomplishes a great deal in terms of word creation (derivation) and to some extent, word inflection (e.g., pluralization). The consonant root can be viewed as a nucleus or core around which are constellated a wide array of potential meanings, depending on which pattern is keyed into the root. Roots and patterns are interacting components of word meaning and are both bound morphemes. They each convey specific and essential types of meaning, but neither one can exist independently because they are abstract mental representations.⁷

2.1 A definition of root

A **root** is a relatively invariable discontinuous bound morpheme, represented by two to five phonemes, typically three consonants in a certain order, which interlocks with a pattern to form a stem and which has lexical meaning.⁸

The **root** morpheme (for example, /*k-t-b*/) is “discontinuous” because vowels can be interspersed between those consonants; however, those consonants must always be present and be in the same sequence: first /*k*/, then /*t*/, then /*b*/). The usual number of consonants in an Arabic root is three and these constitute “by far the largest part of the language” (Haywood and Nahmad, 1962: 261). However, there are also two-consonant (biliteral), four-consonant (quadriliteral) (such as *z-l-z-l*, *b-r-h-n*, *t-r-j-m*), and five-consonant roots (quinquilateral) (such as *b-r-n-m-j*).⁹

The root is said to contain lexical meaning because it communicates the idea of a real-world reference or general field denotation (such as “writing”). It is useful to think of a lexical root as denoting a semantic field because it is within that

⁷ The fact that they are abstract does not diminish the fact that they are strong psychological realities for Arabic speakers. According to Frisch and Zawaydeh (2001, 92) “there is clear psycholinguistic evidence that Arabic consonantal roots are a distinct component of the Arabic mental lexicon.”

⁸ I am indebted to Professor Wallace Erwin for this definition.

⁹ Aside from the reduplicated four-consonant root, such as *w-s-w-s* or *h-m-h-m*, which is inherently Arabic, four- and five-consonant roots can be borrowings from other languages. Some have been part of the Arabic lexicon for hundreds of years; others are recent borrowings (such as *t-l-f-n* ‘to telephone’). The Arab grammarian al-Khalil ibn Ahmad (d.791) made an extensive study of Arabic lexical roots and determined which were Arabic and which were not according to rules of Arabic phonology and phonotactics. See Sara 1991 on al-Khalil’s phonology.

field that actual words come into existence, each one crystalizing into a specific lexical item. The number of lexical roots in Arabic has been estimated between 5,000 and 6,500.¹⁰

2.2 A definition of pattern

A **pattern** is a bound and in many cases, discontinuous morpheme consisting of one or more vowels and slots for root phonemes (radicals), which either alone or in combination with one to three derivational affixes, interlocks with a root to form a stem, and which generally has grammatical meaning.¹¹

The pattern is defined as discontinuous because it intersperses itself among the root consonants (as in the word *kaatib*).¹² It is useful to think of it as a kind of template onto which different roots can be mapped.¹³ The “derivational affixes” mentioned in the definition include the use of consonants that mark grammatical functions, such as the derivational prefix *mu-* for many participles, the prefix *ma-* for a noun of place, or the relative adjective suffix *-iyy*. Consonants that are included in Arabic pattern formation are: /ʔ/ (*hamza*), /t/ (*taaʔ*), /m/ (*miim*), /n/ (*nuun*), /s/ (*siin*), /y/ (*yaaʔ*), and /w/ (*waaw*). These consonants may be used as prefixes, suffixes or even infixes.¹⁴ One further component of patterning is gemination or doubling of a consonant. Therefore, the components of MSA pattern-formation include: six vowels (three long: /aa/, /ii/, /uu/; three short: /a/, /i/, and /u/); seven consonants (ʔ, t, m, n, s, y, w); and the process of gemination.¹⁵

Patterns are said to possess grammatical (rather than lexical) meaning because they signify grammatical or language-internal information; that is, they distinguish word types or word classes, such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives. They can even signal very specific information about subclasses of these categories. For example, noun patterns can readily be identified as active participle, noun of place, noun of instrument, or verbal noun, to name a few. Because patterns are

¹⁰ Kouloughli (1994, 60) cites about 6,500 lexical roots found in a dictionary of 50,000 lexical items. Greenberg (1950) bases his study of lexical root phonotactics on 3,775 verb roots found in Lane (1863) and Dozy (1881).

¹¹ This definition is also from Professor Wallace Erwin.

¹² There are a few patterns that consist of just one vowel (such as *_a_* __, for example, *Harb* ‘war’ or *nawm* ‘sleep,’ and these patterns are not considered discontinuous. Most patterns, however, involve more than one vowel.

¹³ Patterns are sometimes referred to as “prosodic templates” or “stem templates” in discussions of morphological theory (see, e.g., Aronoff 1994, 134, Spencer 1994). For the concept of “templatic morphology” see McCarthy and Prince 1990.

¹⁴ Such as the *taaʔ* infixed between the root consonants *jiim* and *miim* in the Form VIII verb *ijtamaʔ-a* ‘to meet,’ for example, from the root *j-m-ʔ* ‘gathering together.’ Another example is the infixing of *waaw* in the word *shawaariʔ*, the plural of *shaariʔ* ‘street.’ Again, the infix is inserted between the first and second consonants of the root.

¹⁵ A traditional mnemonic device for remembering Arabic morphological components is the invented word *saʔaltumuuniihaa* سألتمونيها ‘you (pl.) asked me it.’

limited to giving grammatical or intralinguistic information, there are fewer Arabic patterns than roots.

3 Word structure: root and pattern combined

Most Arabic words, therefore, are analyzed as consisting of two morphemes – a root and a pattern – interlocking to form one word. Neither an Arabic root nor a pattern can be used in isolation; they need to connect with each other in order to form actual words. A word such as *kaatib* ‘writer,’ for example, consists of two bound morphemes: the lexical root *k-t-b* and the active participle pattern *_aa_i_* (where the slots stand for root consonants).¹⁶ When a root is mapped onto a pattern, they together form a word, “writer,” (“doer of the action of writing”). This word can then act as a stem for grammatical affixes such as case-markers. For example, the accusative indefinite suffix *-an*:

قابلنا كاتباً.

qaabal-naa kaatib-an.

We met a writer.

Understanding the system of root–pattern combinations enables the learner to deduce or at least wisely guess at a wide range of word meanings through compositional semantics by putting together root and pattern meanings to yield a word meaning. This ultimately lightens the load of vocabulary learning.¹⁷

4 Dictionary organization

Arabic dictionaries are based on lexical roots and not word spelling.¹⁸ Instead of relying on the exact orthography of a word, Arabic dictionaries are organized by the root or consonant core of a word, providing under that entry every word derived from that particular root. The root is therefore often called a “lexical root” because it is the actual foundation for the lexicon, or dictionary. The lexical root

¹⁶ In their work on Arabic templatic morphology, McCarthy and Prince propose separating Arabic root and pattern components into distinct “tiers” in accordance with the “Prosodic Morphology Hypothesis” (1990, 3–6).

¹⁷ It is important to note that not all Arabic word-meanings are semantically transparent, despite the rigor of the system. Many words have come to have particular connotations due to cultural, historical, and regional factors and need to be learned through use of the dictionary. (See Bateson 2003, 1–3.) For a helpful analysis of Arabic morphology as it relates to the lexicon, see Stowasser 1981.

¹⁸ The roots in an Arabic dictionary are listed alphabetically according to the order of letters in the Arabic alphabet. For example, the root *k-t-f* comes after *k-t-b* because */f/* comes after */b/* in the alphabet. Therefore, in order to find the root, one has to know the order of the alphabet. This is dealt with further in Appendix 1. This system applies to genuinely Arabic words or words that have been thoroughly Arabized. However, loanwords – words borrowed from other languages – are listed in an Arabic dictionary by their spelling. Note that pre-modern Arabic dictionaries may have alternative arrangements of the root consonants. See Haywood 1965 on the history of Arabic lexicography.

provides a semantic field within which actual vocabulary items can be located. In this respect, an Arabic dictionary might be seen as closer to a thesaurus than a dictionary, locating all possible variations of meaning in one referential domain or semantic field under one entry. See Appendix 1 for a summary of how to use an Arabic dictionary.

5 Other lexical types

5.1 Compounding into one word (*naHt* نحت)

Another word-formation process exists in Arabic: compounding, composing a word by conjoining other words. There are several subprocesses or variations on this procedure, and although it is not common in traditional Arabic morphology, it is used in MSA for recently coined items and for loan-translations, especially technical terms. The classic MSA example is the word *ra'smaal* 'capital' formed from conjoining the words *ra's* 'head' and *maal* 'money.' Another example is *laa-markaziyya* 'decentralization,' from the words *laa* 'no' and *markaziyya* 'centralization.' Sometimes only part of a word is used in the compound, as in the word for 'supersonic,' *faw-SawTiyy*, abbreviating the word for 'above, super' *fawq* to *faw-*, joining it with the noun *SawT* 'sound,' and suffixing the adjectival *-iyy* ending.¹⁹

5.2 Compounding into two words (*tarkiib* تركيب)

Sometimes the lexical item created is not one single word in Arabic, but a noun phrase, such as *'adam wujuud* 'non-existence' or *kiis hawaa* 'airbag,' or a combined participle-noun phrase such as *muta'addid-u l-'aTraaf*, 'multilateral.' With the necessity for rapid translation of technical and computational terms from Western languages into Arabic, these kinds of lexical compounds have become more prevalent over the past two or three decades. See Chapter 5, section 15.2 for further detail on this type of lexical innovation.

5.3 Solid stems

Solid stems are words which cannot be reduced or analyzed into the root-pattern paradigm. They consist of primarily three sets in Arabic: pronouns, function words, and loanwords. Solid-stem words are listed in Arabic dictionaries according to their spelling.

5.3.1 Pronouns

Arabic pronoun categories include personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and relative pronouns. These categories do not fit precisely into the standard root and pattern system, although they show definite phonological relationships to

¹⁹ See Stetkevych 1970, 48–55. See also Chapter 5, section 15.1.

each other within their categories, such as the relation between *haadhaa* ‘this (m.)’ and *haadhihi* ‘this (f.)’.

5.3.2 Function words

Another common subset of solid stems consists of Arabic function words – such as prepositions and conjunctions. These are high-frequency items, and in terms of their structure, they are usually short or even monosyllabic. For example: *fii*, ‘in; at,’ *’ilaa*, ‘to, towards,’ or *wa-* ‘and.’

5.3.3 Loanwords

There are also a number of words (primarily nouns) in MSA that are borrowed directly from other languages, and these are considered, for the most part, to have solid stems, e.g., they cannot be broken down into roots and patterns, such as the words *raadyuu* ‘radio’ and *kumbyuutir* ‘computer.’²⁰

Many proper nouns fall into this category, as well, including Middle Eastern place names such as *baghdaad*, ‘Baghdad’ and *bayruut* ‘Beirut.’²¹ Such words are discussed at greater length in Chapter 5.

6 Inflection: an overview of grammatical categories in Arabic

The term “inflection” generally refers to phonological changes a word undergoes as it is being used in context. In English, some common inflectional categories are: number (singular and plural), tense (e.g., past, present), and voice (active and passive).

Generally speaking, Arabic words are marked for more grammatical categories than are English words. Some of these categories are familiar to English speakers (such as tense and number) while others, such as inflection for case or gender, are not. There are eight major grammatical categories in Arabic: tense/aspect, person, voice, mood, gender, number, case, definiteness. Six of these apply to verbs (tense/aspect, person, voice, mood, gender, number), four apply to nouns and adjectives (gender, number, case, definiteness), and four apply to pronouns (person, gender, number and – to a limited extent – case).

Here is a brief summary of these categories and their roles in Arabic. Details on all these topics are found as noted under specific reference points.

6.1 Tense/Aspect

Tense and aspect can be seen as two different ways of viewing time. Tense usually deals with linear points extending from the past into the future. Aspect sees the

²⁰ A few words borrowed from Western languages, such as “film” and “bank” fit so well into the root-pattern system that Arabic plurals have evolved for them – *’aflaam* and *bunuuk*, respectively.

²¹ These names are not originally Arabic but derive from other languages of the region such as Aramaic or Persian.

completeness of an action or state as central: is the action over with and completed, ongoing, or yet to occur? The points of view of the two terms are different: one focuses on when the action occurs and the other focuses on the action itself – whether it is complete or not. These two grammatical categories do overlap to some extent and have in practice blended into one in MSA.²²

There are two basic morphological tenses in Arabic: past and present, also called perfective and imperfective, respectively. In dealing with the modern written language, many linguists and teachers find it more pragmatic to describe Arabic verbs in terms of tense, and the terms *past/present* (referring to time or tense) and *perfect/imperfect* (referring to aspect) are often used interchangeably. There is also a future tense, indicated by prefixing either *sa-* or *sawfa* to a present tense form. Other tenses exist, such as the past perfect, the future perfect, and the past continuous, but they are **compound tenses** involving the use of auxiliary verbs and particles.²³

6.2 Person

Arabic verbs and personal pronouns inflect for three persons: first person (I, we), second person (you), and third person (she, he, they). There are differences with English, however, in the gender and number of these persons. For the Arabic first person (*ʾanaa*, *naHnu*) there is no gender distinction. For the second person, there are five forms of “you”: masculine singular (*ʾanta*), feminine singular (*ʾanti*), dual (*ʾantumaa*), masculine plural (*ʾantum*) and feminine plural (*ʾantunna*). For the third person, there are six verbal distinctions and five pronoun distinctions: he (*huwa*), she (*hiya*), they-two masculine (*humaa*), they-two feminine (*humaa*), they masculine (*hum*) and they feminine (*hunna*). (See charts in Chapter 12.) Thus, the total number of person categories in Arabic is thirteen, as opposed to the seven of English (I, you, he, she, it, we, they).

6.3 Voice

The category of voice refers to whether an Arabic verb or participle is active or passive. Generally speaking, the passive is used in Arabic only if the agent or doer of the action is unknown or not to be mentioned for some reason. There are sets of

²² In his description of “the states (tenses) of the verb” in Classical Arabic, Wright (1967, I:51) says: “The temporal forms of the Arabic verb are but *two* in number, the one expressing a *finished* act, one that is done and completed in relation to other acts (the *Perfect*); the other an *unfinished* act, one that is just commencing or in progress (the *Imperfect*)” (emphasis in original). On the same page he gives an indication of the complexity of Arabic tense/aspect relations when he states that “The Arabian Grammarians . . . have given an undue importance to the idea of time, in connection with the verbal forms, by their division of it into the past (*al-maaDii* الماضي) the present (*al-Haal* الحال or *al-HaaDir* الحاضر) and the future (*al-mustaqbal* المستقبل) the first of which they assign to the Perfect and the other two to the Imperfect.”

²³ See Chapter 21 on verb inflection.

morphological inflections and syntactic constructions particular to the passive and these are dealt with in Chapter 38.

6.4 Mood

Mood or “mode” refers to verb categories such as *indicative*, *subjunctive*, *imperative*, or (in Arabic) *jussive*. These categories reflect contextual modalities that condition the action of the verb. For example, whereas the indicative mood tends to be characteristic of straightforward statements or questions, the subjunctive indicates an attitude toward the action such as doubt, desire, wishing, or necessity, and the imperative mood indicates an attitude of command or need for action on the part of the speaker.

The issue of mood marking is a central one in Arabic grammar (along with case marking). Moods fall under the topic of morphology because they are reflected in word structure; they are usually indicated by suffixes or modifications of suffixes attached to the present tense verb stem, and the phonological nature of the verb stem determines what form the suffix will take. The mood markers are often short vowel suffixes, for example, /-u/ for indicative and /-a/ for subjunctive.

In Arabic, mood marking is done only on the imperfective or present tense stem; there are no mode variants for the past tense. The Arabic moods are therefore non-finite; that is, they do not refer to specific points in time and are not differentiated by tense. Tense is inferred from context and other parts of the clause.

Mood marking is determined either by particular particles which govern or require certain moods (e.g., the negative particle *lam* requires the jussive mood on the following verb) or by the narrative context in general, including attitude of the speaker and intended meaning. See Chapters 34 and 35 on verb moods.

6.5 Gender

Arabic exhibits two genders: masculine and feminine.²⁴ For the most part, gender is overtly marked, but there are words whose gender is covert and shows up only in agreement sequences. The gender category into which a noun falls is semantically arbitrary, except where nouns refer to human beings or other living creatures. Gender is marked on adjectives, pronouns, and verbs, as well, but is not inherent, as it is in nouns. Gender is discussed at greater length in Chapter 7.

6.6 Number

Arabic has three number categories: singular, dual, and plural. Whereas singular and plural are familiar categories to most Western learners, the dual is less

²⁴ A very few nouns are both masculine and feminine, for example: ‘salt’ *milH* and ‘spirit’ *ruuH* (see Chapter 7 for further discussion).

familiar.²⁵ The dual in Arabic is used whenever the category of “two” applies, whether it be in nouns, adjectives, pronouns, or verbs.

The concept of plural therefore applies to three or more entities. This category interacts in specific ways with the category of gender and also with a morphological category which is peculiar to Arabic: humanness. Both gender and humanness affect the way in which a noun, participle, or adjective is pluralized.

Numerals themselves, their structural features and the grammatical rules for counting and sequential ordering, constitute one of the most complex topics in Arabic. They are discussed in Chapter 15.

6.7 Case

Arabic nouns and adjectives normally inflect for three cases: nominative, genitive, and accusative. Cases fall under the topic of morphology because they are part of word structure; they are usually suffixes attached to the word stem, and the nature of the word stem determines what form the suffix will take.²⁶ In general, the case markers are short vowel suffixes: *-u* for nominative, *-i* for genitive and *-a* for accusative, but there are substantial exceptions to this.²⁷ A case-marking paradigm is usually referred to as a *declension*; there are eight different nominal declensions in Arabic and these are discussed in Chapter 7.

Cases also fall under the topic of syntax because they are determined by the syntactic role of a noun or adjective within a sentence or clause.²⁸ To indicate roughly how the system works, the nominative case typically marks the subject role (most often the agent or doer of an action); the accusative marks the direct object of a transitive verb or it may mark an adverbial function; and the genitive is used mainly in two roles: marking the object of a preposition and marking the possessor in a possessive structure. For case roles and rules, see Chapter 7, section 5.

6.8 Definiteness: determiners

Arabic has both definite and indefinite markers. The definite marker is a word (*al-*) which is not independent but is prefixed to nouns and adjectives; the indefiniteness marker is an affix (*-n*), normally suffixed to the case-marking vowel on nouns and adjectives; thus, *al-bayt-u* (‘the house’ – nominative, definite), but *bayt-u-n* (‘a house’ – nominative, indefinite). The suffixed */-n/* sound is not written with the

²⁵ In English, there are some words that refer specifically to two items such as “both” and “pair.”

²⁶ For example, a diptote word such as *wuzaraa* ‘ministers’ will show the genitive marker as *fatHa*, not *kasra*, because of the nature of its morphological pattern: *CuCaCaa*’.

²⁷ The exceptions fall into two categories: exceptions determined by morphological rules (such as the word pattern) and exceptions determined by phonological rules (such as the rule that two vowels cannot combine).

²⁸ Traditional Arabic grammar deals with case inflections as a category of syntax (*naHw*) rather than morphology (*Sarf*).

letter /n/ (*nuun*) but is indicated by modifying the short vowel case-marker (see Chapter 7, section 4). Whereas the definite article is visible in Arabic script, the indefinite marker normally is not.²⁹

7 Distribution of inflectional categories: paradigms

In terms of the distribution of the above eight categories of inflection, Arabic verbs inflect for the first six: tense/aspect, person, voice, mood, gender, and number. Nouns and adjectives inflect for the last four: gender, number, case, and definiteness. Pronouns inflect for gender, number, and – to some extent – case. Any verb, for example, can be analyzed as being marked for six categories; any noun can be analyzed for four categories and any pronoun for three. This means that word structure in MSA is complex, and that verbs have the most complex structure of all.

Grammatical paradigms are charts or frameworks for words which show all their possible inflections.³⁰ In traditional Western grammars, there are two major divisions of paradigms: verbs and nominals (nouns, adjectives and pronouns). A verb paradigm is called a conjugation; a nominal paradigm is called a declension. Verbs are said to “conjugate” or inflect for verbal categories of tense, person, number, gender, mood, and voice. Nominals are said to “decline,” to inflect for case, number, gender, and definiteness.

The forms or phonological realizations that these categories take in any particular word are determined by that word’s membership in an **inflectional class**.³¹

8 MSA inflectional classes

An inflectional class contains words whose inflections (either declension or conjugation) are identical, or at least highly similar.

Criteria for inflectional classes: Verbs fall into several classes by virtue of their phonological structure, which affects how they inflect (e.g., hollow verbs, defective verbs, assimilated verbs). So do nouns and adjectives (e.g., triptotes and dip-totes). In addition, nouns and/or adjectives may fall into certain classes because of their origins and etymology. In order to help learners with these many categories and the forms that they take, this reference grammar provides **paradigms** or

²⁸ The exception to this is the accusative indefinite suffix *-an*, which is often written into the script with an *ʿalif* and two *fatHas*.

³⁰ Carstairs-McCarthy points out that there is an abstract notion of paradigm (“the set of combinations of morphosyntactic properties or features . . . realized by inflected forms of words (or lexemes) in a given word-class (or major category or lexeme class) in a given language”) as well as a concrete one: “the set of inflectional realizations expressing [an abstract paradigm] for a given word (or lexeme) in a given language” (1994, 739).

³¹ I am following Aronoff’s (1994, 65) definition of inflectional class: “a set of lexemes whose members each select the same set of inflectional realizations.” Carstairs-McCarthy gives a similar definition: “a set of words (lexemes) displaying the same paradigm in a given language” (1994, 739).

inflectional charts for each inflectional class as well as descriptions of the main morphophonemic processes underlying the resulting forms.

9 Case and mood: special inflectional categories in Arabic

As can be seen in the above descriptions, there are two Arabic inflectional categories that interface with syntax: case and mood. Both of them mark this interfacing by short vowel suffixes, called in English “moods” or “modes” when they apply to verbs, and “cases” when they apply to nouns or adjectives. One of the interesting features of Arabic structure is that the nominative case (on nouns and adjectives) and the indicative marker (on verbs) are to a large extent identical: suffixed /-u/; and the accusative and subjunctive markers are largely identical as well: suffixed /-a/.³² It is important for learners of Arabic to know that in Arabic grammar these two categories are referred to as one; that is, nominative and indicative are considered one category: *raf^c* or *marfuu^c*, and accusative and subjunctive are considered another: *naSb* or *manSuub*.

Because of these formal similarities, case and mood are treated as categories of syntax (*naHw*) in traditional Arabic grammar, and for very sound and compelling reasons. Moreover, there is no theoretical distinction in Arabic between case and mood. Readers who are interested in morphological theory or in studying Arabic grammar more extensively should keep in mind that Arabic sets these categories apart, and that they are of great – even central – importance in Arabic syntactic theory. One can certainly say that these two categories are closer to the syntactic level of analysis than to the semantic or lexical level.³³

³² This is, of course, a generalization. Other formal realizations of these categories exist, but this is the major one.

³³ See Ryding 1993 for more on this topic. See also the entries *Sarf* and *naHw* in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*; and Bohas, Guillaume and Kouloughli 1990, especially Chapters 3 and 4.

Basic Arabic sentence structures

This chapter deals with very basic sentence structure and relations among sentence elements.

1. Essential principles of sentence structure

There are two major syntactic principles that affect the structure of Arabic phrases and clauses: agreement/concord and government.

1.1 Agreement or concord (*muTaabaqa* مطابقة)

Agreement or concord is where words in a phrase or clause show feature compatibility, that is, they match or conform to each other, one reflecting the other's features. For example, a verb is masculine singular if it has a masculine singular subject. A feminine singular noun takes a feminine singular adjective, and so forth. In order to undertake this matching or agreement of features, one needs to be aware of the rules for agreement, and of the categories that constitute feature compatibility.

Generally, in discussion of case systems, the term **concord** is used to refer to matching between nouns and their dependants (typically adjectives, other nouns, or pronouns), whereas **agreement** refers to matching between the verb and its subject.¹ Often, however, these terms are used synonymously. Categories of concord and agreement in Arabic include: gender, number, definiteness, and case for nouns and adjectives, and inflection for gender, number, and person for verbs and pronouns.²

1.2 Government (*amal* عمل)

Government is a syntactic principle wherein certain words *cause* others to inflect in particular ways – not in agreement with the “governing” word (the *‘aamil* عامل), but as a result of the effect of the governing word.³

¹ See Blake 1994, 186, footnote 6.

² For a detailed historical overview of Arabic and Semitic agreement structures, see Russell 1984.

³ The term “government” as an equivalent for the Arabic term *‘amal* is used extensively, but other terms such as “operation” and “regimen” are also used in English translations. All these terms refer to the power of one word, one structure, or one concept to affect the inflection of another word.

In his four-volume grammar of modern Arabic, *al-naHw al-waafii*, Abbaas Hasan defines ‘*aamil*’ as “what supervenes on a word and thereby affects its ending by making it nominative/indicative, accusative/subjunctive, genitive, or jussive” (*maa ya-dxul-u ‘alaa l-kalimat-i fa-yu-’aththir-u fii ‘aaxir-i-haa bi-l-raf ‘i, ‘aw-i l-naSb-i, ‘aw-i l-jarr-i ‘aw-i l-jazm-i*).⁴

Typical “governors” (‘*awaamil* عوامل) in Arabic are verbs, prepositions, and particles. For example, a transitive verb takes or “governs” a direct object in the accusative case. Or a certain particle, such as the negative future marker *lan*, requires the subjunctive mood on the following verb; a preposition requires that its noun object be in the genitive case, and so on.

Case (on substantives) and mood (on verbs) are the two categories affected by **government** in Arabic.⁵

1.3 Dependency relations

Because of these essential principles that characterize the structure of words in phrases and clauses, Arabic can be seen as a language that has a network of **dependency relations** in every phrase or clause. These relations are **key components** of the grammatical structure of the language.

2. The simple sentence

Traditional Arabic grammatical theory divides sentences into two categories depending on **the nature of the first word in the sentence**. Sentences whose first word is a noun or noun phrase are termed *jumal ismiyya* جملة اسمية, or ‘nominal sentences,’ and sentences whose initial word is a verb are termed *jumal fi‘liyya* جملة فعلية, or ‘verbal sentences.’ This first-word criterion is not based on whether the sentence contains a verb, but on whether the verb is initial or not.⁶

In the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language, however, a different distinction is often used for classifying Arabic sentences. This distinction is based on **whether or not the sentence contains a verb**. The English term “equational sentence” is used to refer to verbless predications. The term “verbal sentence” refers to predications that contain a verb. As Abboud and McCarus state, “Arabic sentences are of two types, those with verbs, called *verbal sentences*, and those not containing verbs, called *equational sentences*” (emphasis in original; 1983, Part 1:102).

Confusion sometimes arises with the term “verbal sentence” because if one uses it to refer to the traditional Arabic term, one means “sentence starting with

⁴ Hasan 1987, I:441. The definition is given in an extensive footnote that describes the types of ‘*aamil*’.

⁵ Sometimes the governor is an abstraction (‘*aamil ma‘nawiyy* عامل معنوي), such as the concept “subject of an equational sentence” (*ibtidaa’* ابتداء). For a general outline of the Arabic theory of government in English see Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughi 1991, 57-62. See also Hasan 1987 for further description in Arabic of ‘*aamil lafziyy*’ overt governor’ and ‘*aamil ma‘nawiyy*’ abstract governor.’

⁶ This theoretical distinction, however, is disputed. See Ayoub and Bohas 1983 for a counter argument to the word-order criterion. For more on this, see Cantarino 1974, I:2.

a verb.” But if “verbal sentence” is used to refer to the distinction between verbless and verb-containing sentences, it means “sentence containing a verb.” Similarly, sometimes the terms *jumla ismiyya* and “equational sentence” are taken to be equivalents, but they are not. A *jumla ismiyya* is a sentence that starts with a noun, including those that contain verbs. An equational sentence refers to a predication that is specifically verbless. These terms are not equivalent because they are based on different criteria.

In this text, in keeping with the terms used by Abboud and McCarus, I use the term “equational” to refer to verbless sentences, and “verbal sentence” to refer to those containing a verb.

2.1 Equational sentences in general

Equational sentences are verbless. The reason these sentences are verbless is because the Arabic verb ‘to be’ (*kaan-a*) is not normally used in the present tense indicative; it is simply understood. These sentences consist of a subject or topic (*mubtadaʾ*: ‘what is begun with’) and predicate (*xabar*: ‘piece of information; news’). That is, they typically begin with a noun phrase or pronoun and are completed by a comment on that noun phrase or pronoun. The comment or predicate may take the form of different classes of words and phrases: nouns, predicate adjectives, pronouns, or prepositional phrases. These sentences are “equational” because the subject and predicate “equate” with each other and balance each other out in a complete proposition, or equation.

2.1.1 The structure of equational sentences

The subject or topic of an equational sentence is in the nominative case, and so is the predicate, if it is a noun or adjective. When the predicate is a noun, pronoun, or adjective, it agrees with the subject in gender and number, but not in definiteness.⁷ Generally, the subject is the first element in the sentence, but sometimes the order is reversed, and the predicate comes first.

2.1.1.1 COMMON TYPES OF EQUATIONAL SENTENCES:

- (1) **Noun/adjective:** Here the subject is a noun with the definite article, and the predicate is an adjective (or adjective phrase) marked for indefiniteness.

العالم قرية صغيرة.	الطريق طويل.
<i>al-ʿaalam-u qaryat-un Saghiirat-un.</i>	<i>al-Tariiq-u Tawiil-un.</i>
The world [is] a small village.	The road [is] long.

⁷ Blake (1994, 191, note 2) gives a clear description of the subject-predicate relationship for equational sentences when he states that “the concord between a predicative noun or adjective and a subject would normally be described as concord of the predicative word with the subject, since it typically involves inherent features of the subject being marked on the predicate.”

المنافسة قوية.	الكرز أحمر.
<i>al-munaafasat-u qawwiyyat-un.</i>	<i>al-karaz-u 'aHmar-u.</i>
Competition [is] strong.	Cherries [are] red.

الرياح جنوبية شرقية معتدلة.
<i>al-riyaaH-u januuubiyyat-un sharqiyyat-un mu^c tadilat-un.</i>
The winds [are] moderate southeasterly.

- (2) **Noun phrase/adjective:** Here the subject is a noun phrase and the predicate an indefinite adjective or adjective phrase.

قصر الملك ضخم.	كلها أفلام سياسية.
<i>qaSr-u l-malik-i Daxm-un.</i>	<i>kull-u-haa 'aflaam-un siyaasiyyat-un.</i>
The king's palace [is] huge.	All of them [are] political films.

- (3) **Pronoun/adjective or adjective phrase:**

هو ذكي.	هي أمريكية من أصل عربي.
<i>huwa dhakiyy-un.</i>	<i>hiya 'amriikiyyat-un min 'aSl-in 'arabiyy-in</i>
He [is] intelligent.	She [is] an American of Arab origin.

- (4) **Pronoun/noun:**

أنت صديقتي.	هو خبير.	نحن عرب.
<i>'anti Sadiiqat-ii.</i>	<i>huwa xabiir-un.</i>	<i>naHn-u 'arab-un.</i>
You (f.) [are] my friend.	He [is] an expert.	We [are] Arabs.

- (5) **Demonstrative pronoun/noun:**

هذا دفترتي.	هذه تجربة مهمة.
<i>haadhaa daftar-ii.</i>	<i>haadhihi tajribat-un muhimmat-un.</i>
This [is] my notebook.	This [is] an important experiment.

- (6) **Demonstrative pronoun/adjective or adjective phrase:**

هذا غير صحيح.	هذا جديد.
<i>haadhaa ghayr-u SaHiiH-in.</i>	<i>haadhaa jadiid-un.</i>
This [is] untrue.	This [is] new.

- (7) **Noun/noun or noun/noun phrase:**

زوجتي طبيبة.	الزراعة لغة عالمية.
<i>zawjat-ii Tabiibat-un.</i>	<i>al-ziraa'at-u lughat-un 'aalamiiyyat-un.</i>
My wife [is] a doctor.	Agriculture [is] a world language.

(8) Noun/prepositional phrase:

الحمد لله.

al-Hamd-u li-l-laah-i.

Praise [be] to God.

السلام عليكم.

al-salaam-u 'alay-kum.

Peace [be] upon you.

- (9) **Reversal of subject and predicate:** Sometimes the predicate of an equational sentence will come before the subject. This most often happens when the subject lacks the definite article.

هنا حمامنا.

hunaa Hammaam-u-naa.

Here [is] our bathroom.

بينهما سيدتان.

bayn-a-humaa sayyidat-aani.

Between ('the two of') them [are] two women.

- (10) **Expression of possession:** Possession is usually predicated by means of a preposition or semi-preposition, and it often is the first element of the equational sentence. Because the predication is in the form of a prepositional phrase, the item that is possessed is in the nominative case, being the subject of an equational sentence.

عندي مشكلة.

'ind-ii mushkilat-un.

I have ('at-me is') a problem.

لديهم القدرة.

laday-him-i l-qudrat-u.

They have ('at-them is') the capability.

لها أربع أرجل.

la-haa 'arba'-u 'arjul-in.

They have ('to-them are') four legs.

- (11) **Existential predications: "there is/there are"**
 (11.1) With *hunaaka* "there is; there are":

هناك موضوعان مهمان.

hunaaka mawDuu'-aani muhimm-aani.

There [are] two important topics.

هناك عوامل كثيرة.

hunaaka 'awaamil-u kathiirat-un.

There [are] many factors.

- (11.2) With *thammat-a* "there is; there are":

فتمة قيم مختلفة.

fa-thammat-a qiyam-un muxtalifat-un.

For there [are] different values.

- (12) **Equational sentences with definite predicates: the copula pronoun:**
 These require the copula or "pronoun of separation" to distinguish the

subject from the predicate.⁸ The pronoun agrees with the subject (or *mubtada'*) in gender and number:

المهم هو العودة.

al-muhimm-u huwa l-^cawdat-u.

The important [thing] [is] to return ('returning').

المهم هو العمل.

al-muhimm-u huwa l-^camal-u.

The important [thing] [is] work.

الأم هي نموذج كل النساء.

al-³umm-u hiya namuudhaj-u kull-i l-nisaa'³-i.

The mother [is] the model for all women.

- (13) **Equational sentence with clause as predicate:** In the following equational sentence, the subject is a compound one, and the predicate actually consists of another equational sentence "their source is one."

المسيحية والإسلام أصلهما واحد.

al-masiiHiyyat-u wa-l-³ islaam-u ³aSl-u-humaa waaHid-un.

Christianity and Islam [are from] one source ('their source is one').

- (14) **Negation of verbless sentences:** Verbless sentences are usually made negative with the use of the verb *lays-a* 'to not be' (see Chapter 37 for further description of *lays-a*). When *lays-a* is used, it changes the predicate of the sentence from the nominative case to the accusative case.⁹

(14.1) **Positive statement:**

أنت صديقتنا.

³anti Sadiiqat-u-naa.

You [are] our friend.

Negation:

لست صديقتنا.

las-ti Sadiiqat-a-naa.

You are not our friend.

(14.2) **Positive statement:**

هو خبير.

huwa xabiir-un.

He [is] an expert.

Negation:

ليس خبيراً.

lays-a xabiir-an.

He is not an expert.

⁸ Eid (1991, 33) suggests that "the copula pronoun be analyzed as a predicate expressing the relation of identity."

⁹ It is therefore one of what are called the *nawaasix* or 'converters-to-accusative' described in Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.8.

(14.3) Positive statement:

الطريق طويل.
al-Tariiq-u Tawiil-un.
 The road [is] long.

Negation:

ليس الطريق طويلا.
lays-a l-Tariiq-u Tawiil-an.
 The road **is not** long.

(14.4) Positive statement:

زوجتي طبيبة.
zawjat-ii Tabiibat-un.
 My wife [is] a doctor.

Negation:

ليست زوجتي طبيبة.
lays-at zawjat-ii Tabiibat-an.
 My wife **is not** a doctor.

- (15) **Non-present tense indicative equational sentences:** Sentences that are equational in the present tense indicative need a form of the verb *kaan-a* in other tenses or moods. The verb *kaan-a*, like *lays-a*, requires that the predicate of the equational sentence be in the accusative case (see Chapter 36):

(15.1) Present:

قصر الملك ضخم.
qaSr-u l-malik-i Daxm-un.
 The king's palace [is] huge.

Past:

كان قصر الملك ضخما.
kaan-a qaSr-u l-malik-i Daxm-an.
 The king's palace **was** huge.

(15.2) Present:

الطريق طويل.
al-Tariiq-u Tawiil-un.
 The road [is] long.

Past:

كان الطريق طويلا.
kaan-a l-Tariiq-u Tawiil-an.
 The road **was** long.

(15.3) Present:

زوجتي طبيبة.
zawjat-ii Tabiibat-un.
 My wife [is] a doctor.

Future:

ستكون زوجتي طبيبة.
sa-ta-kuun-u zawjat-ii Tabiibat-an.
 My wife **will be** a doctor.

2.2 The simple verbal sentence (*jumla fi'liyya* جملة فعلية)

2.2.1 Subject as verb inflection only

The simplest verbal sentence consists of a verb and its pronoun subject. The subject pronoun is incorporated into the verb as part of its inflection. It is not necessarily mentioned separately, as it is in English.¹⁰ Past tense verbs inflect with a subject suffix; present tense verbs have subject prefix and also a suffix.

¹⁰ In current linguistic terms, Arabic is a "pro-drop" language. That is, its verbs incorporate their subject pronouns as part of their inflection, and separate subject pronouns are not necessary for indicating person.

عاد.	نتشرف.	نجحت.	يحاولون.
<i>‘aad-a.</i>	<i>na-tasharrafu.</i>	<i>najaH-at.</i>	<i>yu-Haawil-uuna.</i>
He returned.	We are honored.	She succeeded.	They try.

2.2.2 Specification of noun subject

When a **subject noun or noun phrase** is specified, it usually follows the verb and is in the nominative case. The verb agrees with the specified subject in gender. The subject and verb together form a structural unit, or *jumla* جملة.

عاد السفير.	عاد سفير تونس.
<i>‘aad-a l-safiir-u.</i>	<i>‘aad-a safiir-u tuunis-a.</i>
The ambassador returned.	The ambassador of Tunisia returned.
نجحت الحكومة.	نجحت الحكومة الجديدة.
<i>najaH-at-i l-Hukuumat-u.</i>	<i>najaH-at-i l-Hukuumat-u l-jadiidat-u.</i>
The government succeeded.	The new government succeeded.

2.2.3 Intransitive verbs (*al-ʾafʿaal ghayr al-mutaʿaddiya*; *al-ʾafʿaal al-laazima*)

(الأفعال غير المتعدية الأفعال اللازمة)

If the verb is intransitive, it does not take a direct object, but it may be complemented by an adverbial or prepositional phrase:

عاشوا في البلاد العربية.	يهطل الثلج على الجبال.
<i>‘aash-uu fii l-bilaad-i l-‘arabiyyat-i.</i>	<i>ya-hTil-u l-thalj-u ‘alaa l-jibaaI-i.</i>
They lived in Arab countries.	Snow falls on the mountains.

2.2.4 Transitive verbs (*al-ʾafʿaal al-mutaʿaddiya*)

If the verb is transitive, it takes a **direct object**, which is in the accusative case. It may be a noun, a noun phrase, or a pronoun.

لا أعرف شيئاً.	لقي مقاومة.	أجروا محادثات.
<i>laa ʾa-‘rif-u shayʾ-an.</i>	<i>laqiy-a muqaawamat-an.</i>	<i>ʾajraw muHaadathaat-in.</i>
I do not know anything.	He encountered resistance.	They conducted talks.
حزمت حقبيتها.	رفع يده.	شكّلوا لجنة مشتركة.
<i>Hazam-at Haqibat-a-haa.</i>	<i>rafaʿ-a yad-a-hu.</i>	<i>shakkal-aa lajnat-an mushtarakat-an.</i>
She packed her suitcase.	He raised his hand.	They (two) formed a joint committee.

2.2.5 Mention of both subject and object

If both the subject and the object of the verb are specified, the word order is usually Verb-Subject-Object (VSO). This is the standard word order of verbal sentences in Arabic.

فتح كريم فمه.

fataH-a kariim-un fam-a-hu.

Karim opened his mouth.

وقعت مصر اتفاقية.

waqqa^e-at miSr-u ttifaaqiyyat-an.

Egypt signed an agreement.

يحمل السفير رسالة.

ya-Hmil-u l-safiir-u risaalat-an.

The ambassador is carrying a letter.

2.3 Summary of basic sentence relations

The basic dependency relations in a simple Arabic verbal sentence are therefore as follows:

- (1) The subject is incorporated in the verb as part of its inflection.
- (2) The subject may **also** be mentioned explicitly, in which case it usually follows the verb and is in the nominative case. The verb agrees in gender with its subject.
- (3) A transitive verb, in addition to having a subject, also takes a direct object in the accusative case. This object follows the verb and any mentioned subject.
- (4) The basic word order is thus VSO: Verb–Subject–Object.
- (5) The word order may vary to SVO (Subject–Verb–Object) or even VOS (Verb–Object–Subject) under certain conditions.¹¹

2.4 Further dependency relations

There are a few issues that add to the complexity of the basic structure of syntactic relations. These have to do with verb–subject agreement and word order.

2.4.1 Verb–subject agreement

In a verb-initial sentence or clause, the verb agrees with its subject in gender, but not always in number. **If the verb precedes the subject and the subject is dual or plural, the verb remains singular.**¹² Thus a dual or plural noun subject when it follows the verb, does not influence verb inflection for number.¹³

2.4.1.1 PLURAL OR DUAL SUBJECT FOLLOWING VERB: If the subject is plural or dual, and it follows the verb, the verb inflects only for gender agreement, and not number agreement. The verb remains singular.

¹¹ See Parkinson 1981 for a study of word-order shift in MSA.

¹² This restriction on the number inflection of the Arabic verb is sometimes referred to as “agreement asymmetry.” See Bolotin 1995 for further analysis of this topic.

¹³ See Mohammed 1990 for extensive analysis of issues in subject–verb agreement in MSA.

ضحك الطلاب.

DaHik-a l-Tullab-u.

The students laughed. ('He-laughed, the students.')

يظهر الروس نبلاء وكراماً.

ya-Zhar-u l-ruus-u nubalaa^a-a wa-kiraam-an.

The Russians appear [as] noble and generous. ('He-appears, the Russians . . .')

وصل الرئيسان إلى دمشق أمس.

waSal-a l-raⁱiis-aani ⁱilaa dimashq-a ^aams-i.

The two presidents arrived in Damascus yesterday. ('He-arrived, the two presidents . . .')

تشتري النساء خبزا.

ta-shtarii l-nisaa^a-u xubz-an.

The women buy bread. ('She-buys, the women . . .')

شاهدت المدن إضراباً واسعاً.

shaahad-at-i l-mudun-u ⁱiDraab-an waasi^c-an.¹⁴

The cities witnessed an extensive strike. ('She witnessed, the cities . . .')

2.4.1.2 VARIATION IN WORD ORDER: Occasionally, the subject of a verbal sentence or clause precedes the verb. In that case the verb agrees with it in gender and in number:

- (1) **Subject-Verb-Object (SVO):** Within the body of a text the writer may choose to start a sentence with a noun or noun phrase for stylistic reasons or for emphasis. This inverted word order also happens in embedded clauses. Moreover, certain fixed expressions are in the SVO order. When the subject precedes the verb, the verb agrees with it in gender **and in number**.¹⁵ Technically, this word order converts a *jumla fi^lliyya* (verbal sentence) into a *jumla ismiyya* (nominal sentence).

المدينة تملك تراثاً إسلامياً.

al-madiinat-u ta-mlik-u turaath-an ⁱislaamiyy-an.

The city possesses an Islamic heritage.

السعادة تغمرني.

al-sa^aaadat-u ta-ghmur-u-nii.

Happiness overwhelms me.

¹⁴ Note that the subject here is nonhuman, and therefore takes feminine singular agreement.

¹⁵ When a noun or noun phrase is sentence-initial, the sentence is considered a *jumla ismiyya* even if it contains a verb, in accordance with traditional Arabic grammatical theory which bases sentence categories on the nature of the sentence-initial word. See also note 6.

كثيرون منهم يسافرون في رحلة منظمة.
kathiir-uuna min-hum yu-saafir-uuna fii riHlat-in munaZZamat-in.
 Many of them are traveling on an organized tour.

الله يسلمك.
allaah-u yu-sallim-u-ka.
 [May] God keep you safe.

القوات تشن حملة واسعة بحثا عن أسلحة.
al-quwwaat-u ta-shunn-u Hamlat-an waasi'at-an baHth-an 'an 'asliHat-in.
 The forces are launching an extensive campaign to search for weapons.

وهناك أيضا فتيات يمارسن كرة القدم.
wa-hunaaka 'ayD-an fatayaat-un yu-maaris-na kurat-a l-qadam-i.
 (And) there are also young women who play ('practice') soccer.

- (2) **Headlines and topic sentences:** In Arabic newspapers it is often the case that the headline will be SVO whereas the first or lead sentence in the article, recapping the same thing, will be VSO. This shift in word order illustrates the attention-getting function of the SVO word order.¹⁶

Headline: SVO:

فرنسا تحذر الناشطين الإسلاميين.
faransaa tu-Hadhdhir-u l-naashiT-iina l-'islaamiyy-iina.
 France warns Islamic activists.

Lead sentence: VSO:

حذرت فرنسا أمس إسلاميين متشددين.
Hadhdhar-at faransaa 'ams-i 'islaamiyy-iina mutashaddid-iina.
 France yesterday warned Islamic extremists.

- (3) **Preposed direct object (topic and comment):** For stylistic reasons, an object of a verb or preposition may be preposed at the beginning of a sentence. In this case, a transitive verb (or prepositional phrase) requires a pronoun object to replace and refer to the preposed noun object. The pronoun object on the verb agrees with the noun it refers to in gender and number.

هذه الفرصة لا نجدها إلا في القاهرة.
haadhihi l-furSat-u laa na-jid-u-haa 'illaa fii l-qaaahirat-i.
 This opportunity can only be found in Cairo.
 ('This opportunity, we do not find it except in Cairo.')

¹⁶ See Watson's (1999) article on the syntax of Arabic headlines for more on this topic.

العرب كانت لهم علاقة بحياة إسبانيا.

al-‘arab-u kaan-at la-hum ‘alaaqat-un bi-Hayaat-i ‘isbaanyaa.

The Arabs had a relationship with the life of Spain.

(The Arabs, [there] was **to-them** a relationship . . .)

Sometimes, when this is done, the connectives *‘amma . . . fa-* (‘as for . . .’) are used to identify the topic and comment on parts of the sentence:

أما هذه الفرصة فلا نجدها إلا في القاهرة.

‘ammaa haadhihi l-furSat-u fa-laa na-jid-u-haa ‘illaa fii l-qaahirat-i.

As for this opportunity, it can only be found in Cairo.

- (4) **Verb–Object–Subject (VOS):** In some cases, the verb will come first, and the object will come before the subject of the verb. This is especially true if the object is substantially shorter than the subject. In the following sentences, the object is set in boldface type.

حضر اللقاء عدد من أصحاب الاختصاص.

HaDar-a l-liqaa‘-a ‘adad-un min ‘aSHaab-i l-ixtiSaaS-i.

A number of specialists attended **the meeting**.

(‘Attended **the meeting** a number of specialists.’)

غطّى أحداثها عشرون ألف صحفي.

ghaTTaa ‘aHdaath-a-haa ‘ishruuna ‘alf-a SuHufiyy-in.

Twenty thousand reporters covered **its events**.

(‘Covered **its events** twenty thousand reporters.’)

سيشارك في الندوة عدد من الأساتذة.

sa-yu-shaarik-u fii l-nadwat-i ‘adad-un min-a l-‘asaatidhat-i.

A number of professors will participate in the seminar.

(‘Will participate in **the seminar** a number of professors.’)

- (4.1) **Object plus adverb:** Sometimes an adverb will also be placed before the subject, especially if it is short.

يغادر القاهرة اليوم متوجها إلى باريس وفد مصري.

yu-ghaadir-u l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a mutawajjih-an ‘ilaa baariis wafd-un miSriyy-un.

An Egyptian delegation left **Cairo today** heading for Paris.

(‘Left **Cairo today** heading for Paris an Egyptian delegation.’)¹⁷

وغادر عمان أمس مساعد وزير الخارجية.

wa-ghaadar-a ‘ammaan-a ‘ams-i musaa‘id-u waziir-i l-xaarijiyyat-i.

¹⁷ In this sentence, the object (*al-qaahirat-a*), a short adverb (*l-yawm-a*), and an adverbial phrase (*mutawajjih-an ‘ilaa baariis*) ‘heading for Paris’ have all been inserted before the subject.

The assistant minister of foreign affairs left **Amman yesterday**.
(‘Left **Amman yesterday** the assistant minister of foreign affairs.’)

2.5 Doubly transitive verbs

There are a number of verbs in Arabic that take two objects. Both objects may be expressed as nouns or noun phrases, or one or both may be expressed as a pronoun.

2.5.1 Both objects expressed as nouns or noun phrases

This occurs especially with verbs of asking, considering, requesting, and appointing.

سألوا الطلاب أسئلة كثيرة.
sa'al-uu l-Tullab-a 'as'ilat-an kathiirat-an.
They asked the students many questions.

اعتبر العُمانيون هذه الخطوة إنجازًا تاريخيًا كبيرًا.
i'tabar-a l-'umaaniyy-uuna haadhihi l-xuTwat-a 'injaaz-an taariixiyy-an kabiir-an.
The Omanis considered this step a great historical accomplishment.

اعتبروا الهجوم نوعًا من الدفاع عن النفس.
i'tabar-uu l-hujuum-a naw'-an min-a l-difaa'-i 'an-i l-nafs-i.
They considered the attack a type of self-defense.

2.5.2 One object expressed as noun or noun phrase, the other as pronoun

أعطتهم تمرينات.
'a'T-at-hum tamriinaat-in.
She gave them exercises.

يعتبرونهم نجومهم المفضلين.
ya-'tabir-uuna-hum nujuum-a-hum-u l-mufaDDal-iina.
They consider them their favorite stars.

يعتبره آخرون ضمانًا.
ya-'tabir-u-hu 'aaxar-uuna Damaanat-an.
Others consider it an assurance.

ناشدوه القيام بدور.
naashad-uu-hu l-qiyaam-a bi-dawr-in
They implored him to take a role.

2.5.3 Both objects expressed as pronouns

In this case, one object pronoun is suffixed onto the verb and the other attached to the pronoun-carrier *'iyyaah-*. This occurs mainly with verbs of giving and sending.

أهداني إياه أهل فاطمة.

ʾahdaa-nii ʾiyyaa-hu ʾahl-u faaTimat-a.

Fatima's family sent it to me ('sent me it').

أعطانا إياها.

ʾaʿTaa-naa ʾiyyaa-haa.

He gave it to us ('gave us it').

2.5.4 One object a noun or noun phrase, the other a predicate adjective

In this kind of double accusative, a definite noun serves as object of the verb and an indefinite adjective describes the state or condition of that noun.

شاهد الدنيا جميلة.

shaahad-a l-dunyaa jamiilat-an.

He saw the world [as] beautiful.

ترك الباب مفتوحا.

tarak-a l-baab-a maftuuH-an.

He left the door open.

2.5.5 Passive constructions with doubly transitive verbs

When a doubly transitive verb is in a passive construction, one object becomes the subject of the passive verb (an in the nominative case if mentioned specifically) and the other object remains in the accusative case:

تُوِّجَ بطلا.

tuwwij-a baTal-an.

He was crowned champion.

تُوِّجَ اللاعب بطلا.

tuwwij-a l-laaʿib-u baTal-an.

The athlete was crowned champion.

سئل الطلاب أسئلة كثيرة.

suʾil-a l-Tullaab-u ʾasʾilat-an kathiirat-an.

The students were asked many questions.

عُيِّنَ طبيبا خاصا للخليفة.

ʿuyyin-a Tabiib-an xaaSS-an li-l-xaliifat-i.

He was appointed [as] special physician to the Caliph.

2.5.6 Dative movement with doubly transitive verbs

Where one of the objects of the verb is an indirect object, or beneficiary of the action, an optional structure using the dative-marking prepositions *li-* or *ʾilaa* is possible. It is only permissible, however, if the beneficiary noun follows the direct object, e.g.:

أعطيت الكتاب للبننت.

ʾaʿTay-tu l-kitaab-a li-l-bint-i.

I gave the book to the girl.

Otherwise, the beneficiary noun precedes the object noun and is in the accusative case.¹⁸

¹⁸ These examples are taken from Ryding 1981, 19–23.

أعطيت البنت الكتاب.

^{ʔa}Tay-tu l-bint-a l-kitaab-a.

I gave the girl the book.

2.5.7 Semantic structure of doubly transitive verbs

These verbs fall into four semantic classes:

2.5.7.1 Where the second object is what would be termed an **indirect object** or beneficiary of the action (“I gave **Noura** the book,” i.e., “I gave the book to Noura”);

أعطتهم تمرينات.

^{ʔa}Tat-hum tamriinaat-in.

She gave them exercises.

2.5.7.2 Where the second object is **equivalent to the first** (“We consider him a great author.”) This includes evaluative verbs of deeming, judging, and considering, such as *i^ʕtabara*.¹⁹

يعتبرونهم نجومهم المفضلين.

ya-^ʕtabir-uuna-hum nujuum-a-hum-u l-mufaDDal-iina.

They consider them their favorite stars.

2.5.7.3 Where the first accusative is **caused to be the second** (“They appointed her **ambassador**”) but both refer to the same entity. These verbs include actions such as making, creating, naming, and appointing.

عينوها سفيرة.

^ʕayyan-uu-haa safiirat-an.

They appointed her ambassador.

2.5.7.4 Where each object is **different** (“He taught the students English” = “He caused the students to learn English.”). These are usually Form II or Form IV verbs, causatives of transitive base verbs, such as (Form II) *darras-a* ‘to teach’ (‘to cause someone to study something’) or (Form IV) *ʔaraa* ‘to show’ (‘to cause someone to see something’).²⁰

¹⁹ This group has a special designation in Arabic called *ʔaf^ʕaal al-qalb*, *ʔaf^ʕaal qalbiyya* or *ʔaf^ʕaal quluub* ‘verbs of the heart’ because they denote intellectual or emotional evaluations. See Chapter 7, section 5.3.3 on accusative case.

²⁰ For detailed analysis of double accusatives in MSA see Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2:93–96 and for Classical Arabic, see Wright 1967, II:47–53.

درسني التاريخ.

darras-a-nii l-taariix-a.

He taught me history.

3. Other sentence elements

Sentence elements other than verb, subject, and object (in verbal sentences) and subject and predicate (in equational sentences) include various types of adverbials.²¹

3.1 Placement of adverbials in basic sentences

Arabic adverbial expressions are considered “extras” in the sentence (*faDla* فضلة) because they give information external to the core VS or VSO structure. They are usually quite flexible in their placement and can occur at almost any point in a clause, especially if they consist of short words. More than one may occur in a sentence.

يقضي ليلاليه في الصلاة.

ya-qDii layaali-hi fii l-Salaat-i.

He spends his nights in prayer.

غادر القاهرة أمس السفير الأمريكي الجديد.

ghaadar-a l-qaahirat-a 'ams-i l-safiir-u l-'amriikiyy-u l-jadiid-u.

The new American ambassador left Cairo yesterday.

تنمو ببطء.

ta-nm-uu bi-buT'-in.

They grow slowly.

تأكيدا لما قاله أمس

ta'kiid-an li-maa qaal-a-hu 'ams-i

affirming what he said yesterday

4. Compound or complex sentences

Compound or complex sentences consist of more than one predication. They contain clauses related by means of coordinating conjunctions such as *wa-* ‘and,’ *fa-* ‘and; and so,’ or *bal* ‘but rather.’ These conjunctions have little or no effect on the syntax or morphology of the following clause but build up the sentence contents in an additive way.

Complex sentences, on the other hand, consist of a main clause and one or more subordinate or embedded clauses. Subordinate clauses are of three main

²¹ For further discussion of this, see Chapter 11.

types – complement clauses, adverbial clauses, and relative clauses. In each case, there is usually a linking or connective element (such as *'anna* 'that' or *li-kay* 'in order that' or *alladhii* 'who; which') bringing the two clauses into relation with each other. Many Arabic subordinating conjunctions have a grammatical effect on the structure of the following clause. For example, *'anna* and related particles are followed by a clause whose subject is either a suffixed pronoun or a noun in the accusative; *li-kay* is followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood.

Specific compound and complex sentence types are dealt with in the following chapters:

Chapter 14: Relative pronouns and relative clauses

Chapter 18: Connectives and conjunctions

Chapter 19: Subordinating conjunctions: the particle *'inna* and her sisters

Chapter 34: Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive

Chapter 35: Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative

Chapter 36: Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (*kaan-a wa-'axawaat-u-haa*)

Chapter 37: Negation and exception

Chapter 39: Conditional and optative expressions

Arabic noun types

Arabic nouns fall into a number of different categories depending on their morphology and their relationship to Arabic lexical roots.¹ The extensive range of noun types yields a wealth of lexical possibilities that contribute to what Charles Ferguson has called the sense of “vastness and richness of the Arabic lexicon.”² Two morphological criteria traditionally define Arabic nouns: they can take the definite article and/or they can take nunation.

Most Arabic nouns are derived from trilateral or quadrilateral lexical roots, and all nouns derived from a particular root are found in an Arabic or Arabic-English dictionary clustered under that root entry. Some nouns, however, have restricted roots; certain ones have only two root consonants, others have up to five root consonants. Yet other nouns have solid stems, unanalyzable into roots and patterns. This chapter is intended to give an overview of these noun types, with examples. It is by no means exhaustive and does not go into derivational detail within categories.³ For inflectional characteristics of nouns, see the chapter on noun inflection.

Arabic nouns are usually derived from lexical roots through application of particular morphological patterns. The use of patterns interlocking with root phonemes allows the formation of actual words or stems. Noun patterns themselves carry certain kinds of meaning, such as “place where action is done,” “doer of action,” “name of action,” or “instrument used to carry out action.” The most frequent MSA noun patterns are as follows.⁴

¹ In traditional Arabic grammar, the term *ism* ‘noun’ covers a wide range of form classes. As Abboud et al. (1997, 67) state: “Nouns are divided into five subclasses: nouns, pronouns, demonstratives, adjectives and noun-prepositions.” In this chapter, the topic is restricted to nouns per se. Note that the traditional Arabic definition of a noun is: *kalimat-un dall-at ‘alaa ma‘nan fii nafs-i-hi, wa-lays-a l-zaman-u juz’-an min-haa*; ‘a word indicating a meaning in itself and not containing any reference to time’ (‘Abd al-Latif et al. 1997, 9).

² Ferguson 1970, 377. On the same page he points to the “very complex but highly regular and symmetrical structure of the derivational system.”

³ For further analysis of Classical Arabic noun types, consult Wright 1967, I:106 ff. and Fleisch 1961, I:349–469.

⁴ Fleisch 1961, I:267 has a useful chart of noun types: “Tableau du développement morphologique en arabe.”

1 Verbal noun (*al-maṣḍar* المصدر)

Verbal nouns are systematically related to specific verb forms and can come from triliteral or quadriliteral roots. The verbal noun or *maṣḍar* names the action denoted by its corresponding verb, for example, *wuṣuul* وصول 'arrival' from the Form I verb *waṣala* وصل 'to arrive,' or *'idaara* إدارة 'administration; management' from the Form IV verb *'adaara* أدار / *yu-diir-u* 'to manage, direct.'⁵ Each *maṣḍar* is systematically related to a specific verb form and can be derived from triliteral or quadriliteral roots. Verbal nouns are often abstract in meaning, but some of them have specific, concrete reference e.g., *binaa* بناء 'building' (either the act of building, or the structure itself). In terms of their syntactic usage, verbal nouns may also express in Arabic what an infinitive expresses in English.⁶

This section provides an outline of the typical verbal noun derivation patterns from verb forms I–X and for quadriliterals I–IV. There is further elaboration on these forms in each section devoted to the particular form and its derivations. In this section also there are examples of the typical functions of verbal nouns in context.

1.1 Triliteral root verbal nouns

These nouns name the action denoted by the forms of the verb. The Form I verbal noun patterns are abundant and hard to predict; the derived form verbal nouns are much more predictable in their patterns. These patterns and noun classes are described in detail in the chapters on the various verb forms. Examples here serve to illustrate the extent of this noun class and the types of meaning conveyed by verbal nouns.

1.1.1 Form I

The morphological patterns for creation of verbal nouns from Form I are many and not predictable.⁷ Wright lists forty-four possible verbal noun patterns for Form I or as he terms it, "the ground form" of the ordinary triliteral verb (1967, I:110–12); Ziadeh and Winder (1957, 71–72) list eighteen of the most commonly

⁵ The Arabic term *maṣḍar/maṣādir* also means 'source,' an indication that the term for this type of noun refers to its essential nature as the name of an activity or state. The different schools of medieval Arabic grammatical analysis, the Basrans and Kufans, debated whether the noun or the verb is the most basic element of language, the Basrans arguing that the verbal noun is prior, and the Kufans that the verb is prior.

⁶ Note that the citation form of the verb in Arabic is not an infinitive but a finite, inflected verb form (third person masculine singular past tense). The *maṣḍar* is much closer in meaning to an infinitive, but it is not used as a citation form in Arabic.

⁷ 'Abd al-Latif, 'Umar, and Zahran state that "The verbal nouns of the base form are many and varied and cannot be known except by resorting to language [reference] books" *maṣādir-u l-thulaaṭhiyy-i kathiirat-un wa-mutanawwa'at-un laa tu-raf-u 'illaa bi-l-rujuu-'i 'ilaa kutub-i l-lughat-i* (1997, 83).

used ones in MSA. ‘Abd al-Latif, ‘Umar, and Zahran give an extensive list (in Arabic) with examples and some explanations (1997, 83–86). Following are examples of some of the most common Form I verbal noun patterns found in MSA:

swimming	sibaaHa	(fi ^c aala)	سِبَاحَة
invitation	da ^c wa	(fa ^c la)	دَعْوَة
forgiveness	ghufraan	(fu ^c laan)	غُفْرَان
clarity	wuDuuH	(fu ^c uul)	وُضُوح
bravery	buTuula	(fu ^c uula)	بُطُولَة
honor	sharaf	(fa ^c al)	شَرَف
glory	majd	(fa ^c l)	مَجْد
part	juz ^o	(fu ^c l)	جُزْء
blessing	baraka	(fa ^c ala)	بَرَكَه
knowledge	ma ^c rifa	(maf ^c ila)	مَعْرِفَة

1.1.2 Form II

Patterns: *taf^ciil* تَفْعِيل and (for defective roots, especially) *taf^cila* تَفْعِلَة; occasionally *taf^ciila* تَفْعِيلَة.⁸ Less common variants include *taf^caal* تَفْعَال or *tif^caal* تِفْعَال.

strengthening	ta ^c ziiz	تَعْزِيز
equalization	taswiya	تَسْوِيَة
implementation	tanfiidh	تَنْفِيد
reminder; souvenir	tadhkaar	تَذْكَار
ticket	tadhkira	تَذْكَرَة
experiment	tajriba	تَجْرِبَة

1.1.3 Form III

Patterns: *mufaa^cala* مُفَاعَلَة and *fi^caal* فِعَال

attempt	muHaawala	مُحَاوَلَة
debate	munaaqasha	مُنَاقَشَة
struggle	jihaad	جِهَاد
defense	difaa ^c	دِفَاع

⁸ For an extensive list of Form II verbal noun variants in Classical Arabic see Wright 1967, I:115–16.

1.1.4 Form IV

Pattern: *ʔif^caal* إِفْعَال; for hollow verb roots *ʔifaala* إِفَالَة; for defectives, *ʔif^caa^ʔ* إِفْعَاء

exportation	<i>ʔiSdaar</i>	إِصْدَار
preparation	<i>ʔi^cdaad</i>	إِعْدَاد
administration	<i>ʔidaara</i>	إِدَارَة
abolition	<i>ʔilghaa^ʔ</i>	إِلْغَاء

1.1.5 Form V

Pattern: *tafa^cul* تَفَعَّل; for defectives *tafa^c-in* تَفَعَّعْ

tension	<i>tawattur</i>	تَوَتَّرَ
delay	<i>ta^ʔaxxur</i>	تَأَخَّرَ
behavior	<i>taSarruf</i>	تَصَرَّفَ
challenge	<i>taHadd-in</i>	تَحَدَّ
wish, desire	<i>tamann-in</i>	تَمَنَّى

1.1.6 Form VI

Pattern: *tafaa^cul* تَفَاعَلَ; for defectives *tafaa^c-in* تَفَاعَّعْ

disparity	<i>tafaawut</i>	تَفَاوُتْ
mutual exchange	<i>tabaadul</i>	تَبَادُلْ
rivalry	<i>tanaafus</i>	تَنَافُسْ
meeting, encounter	<i>talaaq-in</i>	تَلَاقٍ
avoidance	<i>tafaad-in</i>	تَفَادٍ

1.1.7 Form VII

Pattern: *infi^caal* اِنْفِعَال; hollow verb roots, *infiyaal* اِنْفِيَال; for defectives, *infi^caa^ʔ* اِنْفِعَاء

reflection	<i>in^cikaas</i>	اِنْعِكَاس
preoccupation	<i>inshighaal</i>	اِنْشِغَال
compliance	<i>inqiyaad</i>	اِنْقِيَاد
elapsing	<i>inqiDaa^ʔ</i>	اِنْقِضَاء

1.1.8 Form VIII

Pattern: *ifti°aal* اِفْتِعال; hollow verb root, *iftiyaal* اِفْتِيَال; defective, *ifti°aa°* اِفْتِعاء

acquisition	<i>iktisaab</i>	اِكْتِسَاب
election	<i>intixaab</i>	اِنْتِخَاب
choosing	<i>ixtiyaar</i>	اِخْتِيَار
beginning	<i>ibtidaa°</i>	اِبْتِدَاء

1.1.9 Form IX

Pattern: *if°ilaal* اِفْعِلَال

greenness	<i>ixDiraar</i>	اِخْضِرَار
reddening	<i>iHmiraar</i>	اِحْمِرَار
crookedness	<i>i°wijaaj</i>	اِعْوِجَاج

1.1.10 Form X

Pattern: *istif°aal* اِسْتِفْعَال; hollow root, *istifaala* اِسْتِفَالَة; defective, *istif°aa°* اِسْتِفْعَاء

readiness	<i>isti°daad</i>	اِسْتِعْدَاد
investment	<i>istithmaar</i>	اِسْتِثْمَار
benefit	<i>istifaada</i>	اِسْتِفَادَة
exception	<i>istithnaa°</i>	اِسْتِثْنَاء

1.1.11 Forms XI–XV

These Forms of the verb are rare in MSA. For information about their structure see Chapter 33.

1.2 Quadriliteral root verbal nouns

Verbal nouns from quadriliteral verbs are primarily from Forms I, II, and IV of those verbs, as follows:

1.2.1 Form I: *fa°lal-a* فَعْلَلَة

The most common Form I quadriliteral verbal noun patterns are: *fa°lala* فَعْلَلَة and *fi°laal~fu°laal~fa°laal* فُعْلَال~فُعْلَال~فُعْلَال:

explosion	<i>farqa°a</i>	فَرْقَة
somersault	<i>shaqlaba</i>	شَقْلَبَة

earthquake	<i>zilzaal</i>	زَلْزَالٌ
evidence	<i>burhaan</i>	بُرْهَانٌ

1.2.2 Form II: *tafa'laal-a* تَفَعَّلَ

The Form II quadriliteral verbal noun pattern is *tafa'lul* تَفَعَّلُ:

oscillation	<i>tadhabdhub</i>	تَذَبُّذٌ
decline	<i>tadahwur</i>	تَدَهُّورٌ
serial	<i>tasalsul</i>	تَسَلُّسٌ

1.2.3 Form III: *if'anlala* اِفْعَنْلَلْ

The quadriliteral Form III verbal noun pattern is: *if'inlaal* اِفْعَنْلَلْ. It is extremely rare.

1.2.4 Form IV: *if'alalla* اِفْعَلَّ

The form IV verbal noun pattern is *if'ilaal* اِفْعَلَّ:

serenity	<i>iTmi'naan</i>	اِطْمِئْنَانٌ
shuddering	<i>ishmi'zaaz</i>	اِشْمِئْزَازٌ

1.3 Special characteristics of verbal nouns in context

The function and distribution of verbal nouns parallel that of other nouns except that in addition to those functions, the verbal noun may retain some of its verbal force. There are three ways in which verbal nouns are distinctive in their use:

- (1) they may serve as the equivalent of an infinitive;
- (2) when the verbal noun is from a transitive verb and serves as the first term in an *iDaafa* إضافة structure, it may take an object in the accusative case;
- (3) they may be used as verb intensifiers in the cognate accusative (*maf'uul muTlaq* مَفْعُولٌ مُطْلَقٌ) construction.

1.3.1 Verbal noun as equivalent to gerund or infinitive

The verbal noun may be used as the object of a verbal expression where the English equivalent would be either a gerund or an infinitive.⁹

سَأَحَاوِلُ إِقَاءَ ضَوْءٍ.

sa-'u-Haawil-u 'ilqaa' -a Daw 'in.

I shall try to shed/shedding light.

⁹ In such constructions, the verbal noun is normally interchangeable with the particle *'an* plus a subjunctive verb.

حاولت كسر التقليد.

Haawal-at kasr-a l-taqliid-i.

She tried to break/breaking tradition.

حاول إنقاذ حياة رجل.

Haawal-a 'inqaadh-a Hayaat-i rajul-in.

He tried to save/saving a man's life.

لا يمكن التهرب منه.

laa yu-mkin-u l-taharrub-u min-hu.

It is inescapable ('it is not possible to escape/escaping from it').

بهدف جعل الخريجات يعملن فيه

bi-hadaf-i ja'la-i l-xariijaat-i ya-'mal-na fii-hi

with the aim of having ('making') the graduates (f.) work in it

تتيح للجانب الأمريكي التأكيد.

tu-tiiH-u li-l-jaanib-i l-'amriikiyy-i l-ta'kiid-a.

It grants the American side assurance.

1.3.2 Verbal nouns in *'iDaafas* or with pronoun suffix

The verbal noun may be used in any part of an *'iDaafa*, as the first or second term:

1.3.2.1 VERBAL NOUN AS FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT:

استثمار بلايين الدولارات

istithmaar-u balaayiin-i l-duulaaraat-i

the investment of billions of dollars

انشغال المسؤولين

inshighaal-u l-mas'uul-iina

the preoccupation of the officials

تعيين القضاة

ta'yiin-u l-quDaat-i

the appointing of judges

زيارة القصر

ziyaarat-u l-qaSr-i

visiting the castle

1.3.2.2 AS SECOND TERM:

فرصة الزيارة

furSat-u l-ziyaarat-i

the chance to visit

حزام أمان

Hizaam-u 'amaan-in

safety belt

1.3.2.3 OR EVEN AS BOTH TERMS:

دفع التعويض

daf'-u l-ta'wiiD-i

the payment of compensation

حق اللجوء

Haqq-u l-lujuu'-i

the right of asylum

تعزيز التفاهم

ta°ziiz-u l-tafaahum-i

strengthening of understanding

دعا إلى تعزيز التعاون.

da°aa °ilaa ta°ziiz-i l-ta°aawun-i.

He called for strengthening cooperation.

1.3.2.4 VERBAL NOUNS FROM TRANSITIVE VERBS: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS. When a verbal noun derived from a transitive verb is the first term of an *°iDaafa*, a number of possibilities exist for expressing both the doer of the action (the subject of the verb underlying the verbal noun) and the recipient of the action (the object of the underlying verb).

- (1) The first term of the *°iDaafa* is a verbal noun and the second term is the **subject of the underlying verb**:

استقبال الرئيس

*istiqaal-i l-ra°iis-i*the president's reception
(the president is receiving)

مغادرة السفير

*mughaadarat-u l-safiir-i*the departure of the ambassador
(the ambassador departs)

- (2) The second term of the *°iDaafa* may be the **object of the underlying verb**. Here the first term of the *°iDaafa* is a verbal noun derived from a transitive verb and the second term is the object of the verb.

the raising of the flag

raf°-u l-°alam-i

رفع العلم

entering the church

duxuul-u l-kaniisat-i

دخول الكنيسة

playing a role

la°b-u dawr-in

لعب دور

by using its tail

bi-stixdaam-i dhayl-i-hi

باستخدام ذيله

دعا إلى تشكيل جيش.

da°aa °ilaa tashkiil-i jaysh-in.

He called for the formation of an army.

أدى إلى منع الكتاب.

°addaa °ilaa man°-i l-kitaab-i.

It led to banning the book.

- (3) **Verbal noun + subject and object:** When the subject of the underlying verb is the second term of the *°iDaafa*, or when it takes the form of a pronoun suffix on the verbal noun, the object of the underlying verb may still be mentioned. It follows the *°iDaafa* or the verbal noun plus pronoun and is in the accusative case. Thus the verbal noun retains some of its verbal force in making the object noun accusative.

In most cases in the data covered for this work, the subject of the underlying verb takes the form of a pronoun suffix on the verbal noun.

قبل مغادرته العاصمة

qabl-a mughaadarat-i-hi l-°aaSimat-a

before his leaving the capital

خلال استقباله أمس وفداً من أهالي المفقودين
xilaal-a stiqaal-i-hi ʔams-i wafid-an min ʔaahaalii l-mafquud-iina
 during his meeting yesterday a delegation of families of the missing

ولدى رفضهم ذلك
wa-ladaa rafD-i-him dhaalika
 upon their refusal of that/their refusing that

منذ نيلها جائزتها الأولى
mundh-u naye-i-haa jaaʔizat-a-haa l-ʔuulaa
 since her winning her first prize

عقب إعلانه الانسحاب من الحياة العامة
ʔaqib-a ʔiʔlaan-i-hi l-insiHaab-a min-a l-Hayaat-i l-ʔaammāt-i
 just after his announcing [his] withdrawal from public life

سماعهم الأصوات
samaaʕ-u-hum-u l-ʔaSwaat-a
 their hearing the sounds

1.3.2.6 DOUBLY TRANSITIVE VERBAL NOUN: The verb underlying the verbal noun in an *ʔiDaafa* may be doubly transitive, taking two objects, one of which becomes the second term of the *ʔiDaafa*, and the other of which remains in the accusative case, coming after the *ʔiDaafa*:

تعيين اللواء مديراً للدائرة
taʕyiin-u l-liwaaʔ-i mudiir-an li-l-daaʔ irat-i
 appointment of the general [as] director of the department

تعيين مراد قائداً لقوات الأمن
taʕyiin-u muraad-in qaaʔid-an li-quwwaat-i l-ʔamn-i
 appointing Murad [as] leader of the security forces

1.3.3 Verbal noun and preposition

If a verbal noun derives from a verb-preposition idiom, the preposition is still part of the verbal noun expression:

للفوز بالرئاسة
li-l-fawz-i bi-l-riʔaasat-i
 in order to win the presidency
 (faaz-a bi- = 'to win s.th.')

تحويل الحلم إلى حقيقة
taHwiil-u l-Hulm-i ʔilaa Haqiqat-in

transforming the dream into reality

(Hawwal-a 'ilaa = 'to transform s.th. into s.th.')

أكد نائب الرئيس رغبة بلاده في تحقيق السلام.

'akkad-a naa' ib-u l-ra' iis-i raghbat-a bilaad-i-hi fii taHqiq-i l-salaam-i.

The vice-president affirmed the **desire** of his country **for** achieving peace.

(raghib-a fii = 'to desire s.th.')

استمروا في البحث عن تفسيرات.

istamarr-uu fii l-baHth-i 'an tafsiiiraat-in.

They continued **to search** for explanations.

(baHath-a 'an = 'to search for s.th.')

1.3.4 The cognate accusative: *al-maf'ul al-muTlaq* المفعول المطلق

The cognate accusative emphasizes or intensifies a statement by using a verbal noun derived from the main verb or predicate (which may also be in the form of a participle or verbal noun). The verbal noun and any modifying adjectives are usually in the indefinite accusative. For more on this topic, see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.4.

غضب غضبا شديدا.

ghaDib-a ghaDb-an shadiid-an.

He became **extremely** angry.

وخافوا خوفا شديدا.

wa-xaaf-uu xawf-an shadiid-an.

They became **extremely** afraid.

مصالحنا مرتبطة ارتباطا وثيقا بمصالح الدول العربية.

maSaaliH-u-naa murtabiTat-un 'irtibaaT-an wathiiq-an bi-maSaaliH-i l-duwal-i

l-'arabiyyat-i.

Our interests are **firmly** entwined with the interests of the Arab states.

2 Active and passive participle (*ism al-faa'il* اسم الفاعل,

ism al-maf'ul اسم المفعول)

Arabic participles are descriptive terms derived from verbs. The active participle describes or refers to the doer of the action and the passive participle describes or refers to the object of the action. An entire chapter (Chapter 6) is devoted to these multifunctional words but they are also included briefly here in order to provide examples of yet another noun type in Arabic.

In terms of their structure, participles are predictably derived according to the ten forms of the verb and have characteristic shapes. They may occur as masculine or feminine. When participles refer to human beings, they reflect the gender of the individual referred to. Some participles have acquired specific noun meanings and may be either masculine in form (e.g., *shaari* 'شارع' 'street') or feminine (*qaa'ima* 'قائمة' 'list').

Arabic verbs have both active and passive participles.¹⁰ This section lists examples of both, but more extensive descriptions of base and variant forms are found in Chapter 6 and in the chapters on each form (I–X) of the verb.

2.1 Form I active participle (AP): *faa'il* فاعِل

The Form I AP has the typical pattern of *faa'il* or *faa'ila*. For AP nouns, the form of the plural depends on whether the AP refers to a human being or not. APs referring to humans take either a sound plural or the broken plural *fu'aa'l*; those referring to nonhuman entities often take the *fawaa'il* plural but may take other plurals as well.

rider/s	<i>raakib/rukkaab</i>	راكِب / رُكَّابٌ
spokesman/men	<i>naaTiQ/naaTiQuuna</i>	ناطق / ناطِقُون
street/s	<i>shaari°/shawaari°</i>	شارِع / شَوَارِع
circle/s	<i>daa°ira/dawaa°ir</i>	دائرة / دَوَائِر
base; rule/s	<i>qaa°ida/qawaa°id</i>	قاعدة / قَوَاعِد
suburb/s	<i>DaaHiya/DawaaHin</i>	ضاحية / ضَوَاحٍ

2.2 The extended Form II–X AP nouns

Form II–X APs are typified by having a prefix /mu-/ and a stem vowel *kasra* (/i/). Hollow and defective forms have special patterns described in Chapters 22–31. As a general rule, the plurals for nonhuman referents are formed with the sound feminine plural and for human referents with either the sound masculine or the sound feminine plural.

II: *mufa°il* مُفَعِّل

coordinator	<i>munassiq</i>	مَنْسِقٌ	drug, narcotic	<i>muxaddir</i>	مُخَدِّرٌ
inspector	<i>mufattish</i>	مُفَتِّشٌ	singer	<i>mughannin</i>	مُغَنٍّ

III: *mufaa°il* مُفَاعِلٌ

assistant	<i>musaa°id</i>	مُسَاعِدٌ	lecturer	<i>muHaaDir</i>	مُحَاضِرٌ
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IV: *muf°il* مُفَعِّلٌ

supervisor	<i>mushrif</i>	مُشْرِفٌ	Muslim	<i>muslim</i>	مُسْلِمٌ
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V: *mutafa°il* مُتَفَعِّلٌ

volunteer	<i>mutaTawwi°</i>	مُتَطَوِّعٌ	specialist	<i>mutaxaSSiS</i>	مُتَخَصِّصٌ
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¹⁰ For the most part, only transitive verbs have passive participles.

VI: *mutafaa'il* مُتَفَاعِلٌ

synonym *mutaraadif* مُتَرَادِفٌ

VII: *munfa'il* مُنْفَعِلٌ is rarely used as a noun.

VIII: *mufta'il* مُفْتَعِلٌ

listener *mustami'* مُسْتَمِعٌ elector *muntaxib* مُنْتَخِبٌ

X: *mustaf'il* مُسْتَفْعِلٌ

orientalist *mustashriq* مُسْتَشْرِقٌ importer *mustawrid* مُسْتَوْرِدٌ

2.3 Quadriliteral AP nouns: *mufa'ilil* مُفْعَلِّلٌ

Quadriliteral active participles of Form I are also characterized by a prefix /mu-/ and a stem vowel *kasra* (/i-/). QPPs with human referents take either the sound masculine or sound feminine plural; with those referring to nonhuman entities, the sound feminine plural is usually used. Further discussion of quadriliteral participles is found in Chapter 33.

engineer/s	<i>muhandis/muhandisuuna</i>	مُهَنْدِسٌ / مُهَنْدِسُونَ
translator/s (m.)	<i>mutarjim/mutarjimuuna</i>	مُتَرْجِمٌ / مُتَرْجِمُونَ
translator/s (f.)	<i>mutarjima/mutarjimaat</i>	مُتَرْجِمَةٌ / مُتَرْجِمَات
explosive/s	<i>mufarqi' /mufarqi'aat</i>	مُفَرِّقٌ / مُفَرِّقَات

2.4 Passive participles (PP)

Passive participles that have evolved into use as nouns have a wide range of meanings, and it is not always possible to see immediately how their form relates to their meaning. In the derived forms (II-X), the passive participle often functions as the noun of place for that particular form of the verb (e.g., Form X PP: *mustash-fan* 'hospital, place of healing' or Form VIII PP: *muxtabar* 'laboratory, place of experiment').

2.4.1 Form I: *maf'uul* مَفْعُولٌ

The PP of Form I has the typical pattern of *maf'uul* or *maf'uula*. The plural for non-human PP nouns in this form is often *mafaa'il* or the sound feminine plural; for human referents, the sound plural is usually used.

concept/s	<i>mafhuum/mafaahiim</i>	مَفْهُومٌ / مَفَاهِيم
plan; project/s	<i>mashruu' /mashaarii'</i> ~ <i>mashruu'aat</i>	مَشْرُوعٌ / مَشَارِيعٌ ~ مَشْرُوعَات

group/s	majmuu'a /majmuu'aat	مَجْمُوعَة / مَجْمُوعَات
delegate/s	manduub/ manduubuuna	مَنْدُوب / مَنْدُوبُونَ
official/s (n.)	mas'uu/ mas'uuluuna	مَسْئُول / مَسْئُولُونَ

2.4.2 Forms II–X

The PPs of the extended forms used as nouns have a /mu-/ prefix and *fatHa* (|-a-|) as their stem vowel:

Form II: *mufa' al* مَفْعَل

organization	munaZZama	مُنَظَّمَة	volume (book)	mujallad	مُجَلَّد
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Form III: *mufaa' al* مَفَاعِل is rare

Form IV: *muf' al* مُفْعَل

attaché	mulHaq	مُلْحَق	lexicon	mu'jam	مُعْجَم
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Form V: *mutafa' al* مُتَفَعِّل

requirements	mutaTallabaat ¹¹	مُتَطَلِّبَات
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Form VI: *mutafaa' al* مُتَفَاعِل

availability; reach	mutanaawal	مُتَنَاوَل
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Form VII: *munfa' al* مُنْفَعِّل

slope	munHadar	مُنْحَدَر	lowland	munxafaD	مُنْخَفَض
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Form VIII: *mufta' al* مُفْتَعِّل

society	mujtama'	مُجْتَمَع	laboratory	muxtabar	مُخْتَبَر
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Form X: *mustaf' al* مُسْتَفَعِّل

future	mustaqbal	مُسْتَقْبَل	hospital	mustashfan	مُسْتَشْفَى
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2.4.3 Quadriliteral PP nouns: *mufa' al* مُفْعَل

These PPs have the same characteristics as the derived form trilateral PPs: a prefixed /mu-/ and stem vowel *fatHa* (|-a-|).

camp	mu'askar	مَعْسَكَر	series	musalsal	مُسَلْسَل
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3 Noun of place (*ism makaan* اسم مكان)

Certain noun patterns refer to the place where the activity specified by the verb occurs. These nouns are systematically related to trilateral verbs.

¹¹Usually occurs in the plural.

3.1 Form I nouns of place: *maf^{al}* مَفْعَل

For Form I, most nouns of place are of the pattern *maf^{al}* مَفْعَل or *maf^{ala}* مَفْعَلَة, or, in some cases *maf^{il}* مَفْعِل. The plural of this type of noun is most often of the *mafaa^{il}* مَفَاعِل pattern or *mafaa^{iil}* مَفَاعِيل pattern.

English	Arabic		English	Arabic	
center	<i>markaz</i>	مَرْكَز	library	<i>maktaba</i>	مَكْتَبَة
entrance	<i>madxal</i>	مَدْخَل	school	<i>madrassa</i>	مَدْرَسَة
exit	<i>maxraj</i>	مَخْرَج	mosque	<i>masjid</i>	مَسْجِد
playground	<i>mal^{ab}</i>	مَلْعَب	(Arab) west	<i>maghrib</i>	مَغْرِب
restaurant	<i>maT^{am}</i>	مَطْعَم	(Arab) east	<i>mashriq</i>	مَشْرِق
swimming pool	<i>masbaH</i>	مَسْبَح	bank	<i>maSrif</i>	مَصْرَف

Some nouns of place have both *maf^{al}* and *maf^{il}* forms:

foothold *mawTi^o* and *mawTa^o* مَوَاطِي / مَوَاطَأَ

3.2 Forms II–X nouns of place

For nouns of place from derived forms (II–X), the passive participle is used. The most common derived nouns of place are from forms VII, VIII and X. The sound feminine plural is used for the plural of these nouns.

lowland	<i>munxafaD</i>	VII	مُنْخَفَضٌ
level	<i>mustawan</i>	VIII	مُسْتَوًى
colony	<i>musta^cmara</i>	X	مُسْتَعْمَرَة
settlement	<i>mustawTana</i>	X	مُسْتَوَاطِنَة
future	<i>mustaqbal</i>	X	مُسْتَقْبَل
hospital	<i>mustashfan</i>	X	مُسْتَشْفًى

4 Noun of instrument (*ism al-^aaala* اسم الآلة)

A specific derivational pattern is used to denote nouns of instrument, i.e., nouns that denote items used in accomplishing a certain action. The patterns are *mif^{aal}* مِفْعَال, *mif^{al}* مِفْعَل, and *mif^{ala}* مِفْعَلَة. See also section 5.2 below.

Some examples include:

key	miftaaH	مِفْتَاح	elevator	miS ^c ad	مِصْعَد
broom	miknasa	مِكنَسَة	scissors	miqaSS	مِقَصّ
scale	miqyaas	مِقْيَاس	refinery	miSfaat	مِصْفَاة

5 Nouns of intensity, repetition, profession

A special noun pattern exists to denote intensity of action or repeated action: *fa^{cc}aal* فَعَّال.¹² For human beings the nouns usually denote profession, for example:

artist (m./f.)	fannaan/fannaana	فَنَّان / فَنَّانَة
baker (m./f.)	xabbaaz/xabbaaza	خَبَّاز / خَبَّازَة
tailor (m./f.)	xayyaaT/xayyaaTa	خَيَّاط / خَيَّاطَة
weightlifter (m./f.)	rabbaa ^c /rabbaa ^c	رَبَّاع / رَبَّاعَة

5.1 Nouns of profession

The abstract noun denoting the **name of a profession** is often of the verbal noun pattern *fi^caala* فِعَالَة, as follows:

beekeeping	niHaala	نِحَالَة	surgery	jiraaHa	جِرَاحَة
carpentry	nijaara	نِجَارَة			

5.2 Nouns of intensity as nouns of instrument

Occasionally, the pattern for nouns of intensity (*fa^{cc}aal* فَعَّال or *fa^{cc}aala* فَعَّالَة) is used to denote an **instrument**. For machines or instruments that perform specified tasks, the feminine form of the noun of intensity is often used:

opener	fattaaHa	فَتَّاحَة	freezer	thallaaja	ثَلَّاجَة
dryer	nashshaafa	نَشَّافَة	car	sayyaara	سَيَّارَة
washer	ghassaala	غَسَّالَة			

6 Common noun (*al-ism* الاسم)

This is a vast category. Common nouns derived from **triliteral** lexical roots include an extensive range of items which can be of either gender. These nouns may or may not be related to lexical roots that generate verbs.

¹² Nouns of intensity usually have a *shadda* on the middle radical, just as the Form II verb doubles the middle radical in order to denote frequency or intensity. A certain iconicity appears to exist in Arabic between doubling the strength of a consonant and reference to intensity or frequency of action. For more on iconicity and sound symbolism in Arabic see E. K. Wright 2000.

basket	salla	سَلَّة	coffee	qahwa	قَهْوَة
man	rajul	رَجُل	fog	Dabaab	ضَبَاب
homeland	waTan	وَطَن	horse; mare	faras	فَرَس
bridge	jisr	جِسْر	tree	shajara	شَجَرَة
saddle	sarj	سَرَج	book	kitaab	كِتَاب

7 Generic noun (*ism al-jins* اسم الجنس) and noun of instance (*ism al-marra* اسم المرة)

Generic nouns refer to something in general, such as “laughter” or “agriculture.” Sometimes they refer to something that can be counted and sometimes it is not possible to pluralize the noun because it is an abstraction and a generality. It can be said that the concept of “generic” contrasts with “specific.”¹³ Examples of generic nouns in Arabic would be:

dancing	raqS	رَقَص	support	da‘m	دَعْم
safety	‘amaan	أَمَان	victory	fawz	فَوْز

Nouns that refer to actions in general, such as “laughing” or “dancing,” can be contrasted with a singular occurrence or instance of that action, such as “a short laugh” or “a traditional dance.” The generic term is often masculine singular, whereas the individual instance is often feminine singular, marked by *taa’ marbuuTa*. This is a general rule, but sometimes the generic term comes to be used to refer to individual, concretized instances (e.g., *binaa’* – see below).

dancing	raqS	رَقَص	waves	mawj	مَوْج
a dance	raqSa	رَقْصَة	a wave	mawja	مَوْجَة
shipping	shaHn	شَحْن	building	binaa’	بِنَاء
a shipment	shaHna	شَحْنَة	a building	binaa’ ~ binaaya	بِنَاء ~ بِنَايَة

The plural used for counting or referring to a number of these instances of action is often the sound feminine plural, but may also be a broken plural, especially if the feminine singular is not used as the instance noun (e.g., *binaa’* ‘a building’).

many laughs	DaHkaat-un kathiirat-un	ضَحَكَات كَثِيرَة
traditional dances	raqSaat-un taqliidiyyat-un	رَقَصَات تَقْلِيدِيَّة
heat waves	mawjaat-un Haarrat-un	مَوْجَات حَارَّة

¹³ See Hurford 1994, 81–82, for good examples of generic nouns and noun phrases in English.

sound waves	^ʔ amwaaḡ-un Sawtiyyat-un	أَمْوَاجٌ صَوْتِيَّةٌ
new buildings	^ʔ abniyat-un ḡadiidat-un	أَبْنِيَّةٌ جَدِيدَةٌ

There is thus a formal distinction in Arabic between a noun that denotes a generic activity or state and a semelfactive noun, that is, a noun that denotes a single occurrence or instance of that activity and which is usually feminine. The units or instances can be pluralized or counted using a plural form of the “noun of instance.”

8 Diminutive (*al-taṣḡiir* التصغير)

There are specific noun patterns used to denote smallness or endearment. These nouns can refer to small things such as a pocket dictionary, a short period of time, or to people and people’s names.¹⁴ The main pattern is *CuCaYc* or *CuCaYyaC*.

		root	
very small state	<i>duwayla</i>	<i>d-w-l</i>	دَوَيْلَةٌ
little garden	<i>junayna</i>	<i>j-n-n</i>	جُنَيْنَةٌ
little tree, sapling	<i>shujayra</i>	<i>sh-j-r</i>	شُجَيْرَةٌ
lake (‘little sea’)	<i>buḡayra</i>	<i>b-H-r</i>	بُحَيْرَةٌ
a little before	<i>qubayl-a</i>	<i>q-b-l</i>	قُبَيْلٌ
electron	<i>kuḡayrib</i>	<i>k-h-r-b</i>	كُهْرِبٌ
a little while (adv.)	<i>hunayḡat-an</i>	<i>h-n-h</i>	هُنَيْئَةٌ
little daughter	<i>bunayya</i>	<i>b-n</i>	بُنْيَةٌ
Hussein	<i>Husayn</i>	<i>H-s-n</i>	حُسَيْنٌ

9 Abstraction nouns ending with *-iyya*

Although many nouns with abstract meaning exist in Arabic, there is a morphological process for creating even more through suffixing the feminine *nisba* ending *-iyya* (يَّة) to an already existing word stem. In this way, new concepts can be readily created, and this category is an important one in MSA.¹⁵ In fact, its prevalence has led the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo to declare that this type of noun may be derived from any word at all.¹⁶ Nouns created with this process take

¹⁴ The diminutive can also express contempt, but no examples of this occurred in the data.

¹⁵ For a survey of these types of nouns in modern Arabic, see Monteil 1960, 124–26.

¹⁶ ‘Abd al-Latif, ‘Umar, and Zahran 1997, 91: “li-kathrat-i haadhaa l-naw‘-i min-a l-maSaadir-i wa-‘ahammiyyat-i-hi ‘aṣḡar-a majma‘-u l-luḡat-i l-‘arabiyyat-i bi-l-qaahirat-i qaraa-an bi-qiyaasiyyat-i-hi min ‘ayy-i kalimat-in.”

the sound feminine plural if they are count nouns. Some examples include the following.

9.1 Derivation from a singular noun

This noun can be of any sort, derived or non-derived:

theory	naZariyya	نَظَرِيَّة	Christianity	al-masiiHiyya	المَسِيحِيَّة
diversification	ta'addudiyya	تَعَدُّدِيَّة	operation	'amaliyya	عَمَلِيَّة
legitimacy	shar'iyya	شَرْعِيَّة	terrorism	'irhaabiyya	إِرْهَابِيَّة
diary	yawmiyya	يَوْمِيَّة			

Sometimes from a noun stem which is otherwise not regularly in use:

divinity	'uluuhiyya	أَلُوْهِيَّة	oneness, unity	waHdaaniyya	وَحْدَانِيَّة
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9.2 Derivation from a plural noun

stardom	nujuumiyya	نُجُومِيَّة	horsemanship	furuusiyya	فُرُوسِيَّة
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9.3 Derivation from an adjective

The adjective can be in the comparative form as well as in the base form.

importance	'ahammiyya	أَهْمِيَّة	priority	'afDaliyya	أَفْضَلِيَّة
majority	'akthariyya	أَكْثَرِيَّة	effectiveness	fa'°aaliyya	فَعَالِيَّة
minority	'aqalliyya	أَقْلِيَّة	priority	'awwaliyya~ 'awlawiyya	أَوَّلِيَّة~أُولَوِيَّة

فهناك أولويات أهم.

fa-hunaaka 'awlawiyyaat-un 'ahamm-u.

There are more important **priorities**.

هناك أفضلية لمن يجيد اللغة الإنكليزية.

hunaaka 'afDaliyyat-un li-man yu-jiid-u l-lughat-a l-° inkliiziyyat-a.

There is a **preference** for those who have mastered English.

9.4 Derivation from a particle or pronoun

identity	huwiyya	هُوِيَّة	quantity	kammiyya	كَمِيَّة
quality	kayfiyya	كَيْفِيَّة			

9.5 Derivation from a participle

responsibility	mas'uuliyya	مَسْؤُولِيَّة	majority	ghaalibiyya	غَالِبِيَّة
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9.6 Derivation from a borrowed word

chauvinism *shuufiiniyya* شُوفِينِيَّةُ diplomacy *diibluumaasiyya* دَيْبُلُومَاسِيَّةُ
transcendentalism *tiraansindantaliyya* تِرَانْسِنْدَنْتَلِيَّةُ

10 Nouns not derived from verb roots

10.1 Primitive nouns

Certain nouns in Arabic are not derived from verb roots. Some of these are what Wright (1967) and others refer to as “primitive,”¹⁷ i.e., well-attested substantives that form part of the core lexicon of the language but are not verbal derivatives.¹⁸ In certain dictionaries, verbs may be listed with these nouns, but the verbs are usually denominative – derived from the noun.

10.1.1 Triliteral

man	<i>rajul</i>	رَجُلٌ	trap	<i>faxx</i>	فَخٌّ
eye	<i>‘ayn</i>	عَيْنٌ	day	<i>yawm</i>	يَوْمٌ
head	<i>ra’s</i>	رَأْسٌ	panther; cheetah	<i>fahd</i>	فَهْدٌ

10.1.2 Biliteral primitives

A few archaic nouns in Arabic have just two consonants (sometimes just one) in the root. These often refer to basic family relationships, body parts, or essential physical or social concepts. Some of the most frequently used ones include:

mother	<i>‘umm</i>	أُمُّ	hand	<i>yad</i>	يَدٌ
father	<i>‘ab</i>	أَبٌ	mouth	<i>fam/fuu</i>	فَمٌ / فَوْ
brother	<i>‘ax</i>	أَخٌ	name	<i>ism</i>	إِسْمٌ
son	<i>ibn/bin</i>	ابْنٌ / بِنٌ	water	<i>maa’</i>	مَاءٌ
father-in-law	<i>Ham</i>	حَمٌ	possessor	<i>dhuu</i>	ذُو
blood	<i>dam</i>	دَمٌ			

10.1.3 The five nouns (*al-‘asmaa’ al-xamsa* الأَسْمَاءُ الْخَمْسَةُ)

A subset of five of these nouns (*‘ab*, *‘ax*, *fuu*, *Ham*, *dhuu*)¹⁹ inflect for case by using a long vowel instead of a short vowel when they are the first term of an annexation structure or when they have a personal pronoun suffix.²⁰

¹⁷ See Wright 1967, I:106; Lecomte 1968, 64, and Holes 1995, 127.

¹⁸ As Lecomte states (1968, 64) “Certains noms sont irréductibles à une racine verbale, et paraissent bien constituer le glossaire fondamental de la langue concrète.”

¹⁹ In some cases, a sixth noun is included. It did not occur in the corpus consulted for this text.

²⁰ For more information on these nouns and their inflectional paradigms, see Chapter 7, section 5ff.

أبو ظبي °ab-uu Zabiy Abu Dhabi	من أخيها min °ax-ii-haa from her brother	أبونا °ab-uu-naa our father
كان ذا مغزى kaan-a dhaa maghz-an it was significant (‘possessing significance’)	ديوان أبي نواس diiwaan-u °ab-ii nuwaas-in the collected poetry of Abu Nuwas	

11 Common nouns from quadriliteral and quinquiliteral roots: (أَسْمَاءُ رِبَاعِيَّةٌ وخَمَاسِيَّةٌ °asmaa° rubaa° iyya wa xumaasiyya)

11.1 Quadriliteral

A number of Arabic common nouns are **quadriliteral**. Some of these words are of Arabic origin, and some of them derive from other languages. These quadriliteral nouns rarely have corresponding verb forms. For example:

eternity	sarmad	سَرَمَدٌ	hedgehog	qunfudh	قَنْفُذٌ
scorpion	°aqrab	عَقْرَبٌ	crocodile	timsaaH	تِمْسَاحٌ
bomb	qunbula	قَنْبُلَةٌ	dagger	xanjar	خَنْجَرٌ
box	Sanduuq	صَنْدُوقٌ	wasp	zunbuur	زَنْبُورٌ
noise; uproar	DawDaa°	ضَوْضَاءٌ	amulet; talisman	Tilsam	طِلْسَمٌ

11.2 Reduplicated quadrilaterals

Certain quadriliteral noun roots consist of reduplicated pairs of consonants. These often refer to naturally occurring phenomena. Some of these nouns are associated with quadriliteral verbs that denote a particular repetitive sound or motion.

skull	jumjuma	جُمَّمَةٌ	pepper	filfil	فَلْفِلٌ
sesame	simsim	سِمْسِمٌ	pearl	lu°lu°	لُؤْلُؤٌ
mint	na°na°	نَعْنَعٌ	bat (animal)	waTwaaT	وَطَاطٌ

11.2.1 Nouns from quadriliteral reduplicated verbs

زَلْزَالٌ	رَفْرَفَةٌ
zilzaal earthquake (to shake: zalzal-a زَلَّزَلَ)	rafrafa fluttering (to flutter: rafraf-a رَفَّرَفَ)

وَسْوَسَ

waswasa rustling, whispering (to whisper: waswas-a وَسَّوَسَ)

11.3 Nouns from quinquiliteral roots

Some common nouns are based on quinquiliteral (five-consonant) roots.²¹

chess	shaTranj	شَطْرَنْج
program	barnaamaj	بَرْنَامَج
parsley	baqduunis	بَقْدُونِس
spider	‘ankabuut	عَنْكَبُوت
violet	banafsjaj	بَنْفَسَج
quince	safarjil	سَفَرَجِل
salamander	samandal~ samandar	سَمَنْدَل ~ سَمَنْدَر
cauliflower	qarnabiiT	قَرْنَبِيْط
ginger	zanjabiiil	زَنْجَبِيْل

12 Collective nouns, mass nouns, and unit nouns (*ism al-jins* اسم الجنس; *ism al-waHda* اسم الوحدة)

Certain Arabic nouns are terms that refer to groups of individual things in general (grapes, bananas, trees) or to something which occurs as a “mass,” such as wood or stone. Normally, these nouns refer to naturally occurring substances and forms of life. In these cases, reference can also be made to an individual component of the collection or the mass, and so Arabic provides a morphological way of noting this distinction through use of a “unit” noun (*ism al-waHda* اسم الوحدة). Most mass nouns or collective nouns are masculine singular, whereas most unit nouns (or “count” nouns, as they are sometimes called) are feminine singular. Here are some examples:

12.1 Collective/mass term

chicken(s)	dajaaJ	دَجَاج	eggs	bayD	بَيْض
owls	buum	بُوم	fish	samak	سَمَك
bees	naHl	نَحْل	stone	Hajar	حَجَر
almonds	lawz	لَوْز	feathers	riish	رِيْش

²¹ Many of these nouns have a peculiarity in that in the plural, in order to fit into the Arabic broken plural system, they actually lose a consonant, for example, ‘ankabuut /‘anaakib ‘spider/s’. See Chapter 7, section 3.2.3 for more detail.

12.2 Unit term

a chicken	dajaaja	دَجَاجَة	an egg	bayDa	بَيْضَة
an owl	buuma	بَوْمَة	a fish	samaka	سَمَكَة
a bee	naHla	نَحْلَة	a stone	Hajara	حَجَرَة
an almond	lawza	لَوْزَة	a feather	riisha	رَيْشَة

12.3 Plural of unit nouns

If there is a need to count individual nouns or units, or imply variety, the counted noun takes a specific kind of plural that refers not to the generic grouping, but to a number of individual units. That countable plural is often the sound feminine plural, but it may also be a broken plural.

five chickens	xams-u dajaajaat-in	خَمْسُ دَجَاجَاتٍ
six owls	sitt-u 'abwaam-in	سِتُّ أَبْوَامٍ
three eggs	thalaath-u bayDaat-in	ثَلَاثُ بَيْضَاتٍ
types of fish	'anwaa'-u l-'asmaak-i	أَنْوَاعُ الْأَسْمَاكِ

13 Borrowed nouns

In addition to incorporating terms from other Middle Eastern languages, over the centuries Arabic has incorporated words from European languages, such as Latin and Greek. In recent times, much of the borrowing has been from English and French. Most of these borrowed nouns are considered solid-stem words, not analyzable into root and pattern.

music	muusiiqaa	مُوسِيقَى	camera	kaamiiraa	كاميرا
comedy	kuumiidiyaa	كُومِيْدِيَا	doctor	duktuur	دكتور
petroleum	batruul	بَتْرُول	ton	Tann	طن
computer	kumbiyuutir	كَمْبِيُوتَر	film	film	فلم
television	talfizyuun	تَلْفِزْيُون	bank	bank	بنك
telephone	talifuun	تَلْفُون			

Certain common everyday terms, such as “telephone,” “camera,” and “doctor,” also have Arabic-based equivalents (loan translations) (e.g., *haatif*, *'aalat taSwiir*, *Tabiib*, respectively), most of which have been coined by consensus of authorities on Arabic language in the Arabic language academies in Cairo, Baghdad, and

Damascus. These academies are scholarly research institutes whose primary goal is to maintain the accuracy, richness, and liveliness of the Arabic language through defining standards, prescribing correct usage, and setting procedures for the coining of new terms.

The actual choice of using the borrowed term or the Arabic term varies from country to country, author to author, and from publication to publication. The largest category of current loanwords is in rapidly developing technology fields such as biology, medicine, and computer science. Efforts have been made to keep coining Arabic-based equivalents to these technical terms, but it is a challenge to keep pace with the amount of technical data used in the media every day. Here are just a few terms found in current Arabic newspapers:

video	<i>fiidyuu</i>	فيديو	hormones	<i>hurmuunaat</i>	هرمونات
cassette	<i>kaasitt</i>	كاست	cocaine	<i>kuukaayiin</i>	كوكايين
radar	<i>raadaar</i>	رادار	viruses	<i>fiiruusaat</i>	فيروسات

13.1 Borrowed acronyms

Arabic newspaper writing in particular also borrows acronyms for international bodies and uses them as individual words, spelled in Arabic:

UNESCO	<i>al-yuuniiskuu</i>	اليونيسكو	أعلنه اليونيسكو. <i>ʔaʕlan-a-hu l-yuuniiskuu.</i> UNESCO announced it.
OPEC	<i>ʔuubik</i>	أوبك	داخل أوبك وخارجه <i>daaxil-a ʔuubiik wa-xaarij-a-hu</i> inside OPEC and outside of it
UNICEF	<i>al-yuuniisiif</i>	اليونيسيف	

14 Arabic proper nouns

Proper nouns include names of people and places. These come from a variety of sources, many of them Arabic, but some non-Arabic.

14.1 Geographical names

Names of cities, countries, geographical features. Sometimes these include the definite article, sometimes they do not. If the name does not have the definite article, then it is diptote.

Tunisia	<i>tuunis</i>	تونس	The Nile	<i>al-niil</i>	النيل
Morocco	<i>al-maghrib</i>	المغرب	Jidda	<i>jidda</i>	جدة
The Euphrates	<i>al-furaat</i>	الفرات	Cairo	<i>al-qaahira</i>	القاهرة

14.2 Personal names

Arabic personal names are a rich source of cultural information.²² Most given names consist of one word, but some names are actually phrases that include family information (e.g., “son of,” “mother of,” “father of,” “daughter of”) or else reference to religious concepts (e.g., “servant of the merciful,” “light of the religion”). The structure of Arabic family names is highly complex and may include reference to family information, place of origin (e.g., *bayruutiyy* بيروتى, ‘from Beirut’), profession (e.g., *Haddaad* حداد ‘blacksmith’), religion (e.g., *nuur-u l-diin* نور الدين ‘light of religion’), or even physical characteristics (e.g., *ʿaHdab* أهدب ‘humpbacked’). Moreover, naming practices vary throughout the Arab world.²³

Because of the absence of capitalization in Arabic script, learners of Arabic sometimes find it challenging to distinguish proper names from ordinary adjectives and nouns within a text.

14.2.1 Women’s given names

Women’s names may be Arabic or borrowed from another language; if Arabic, they are usually nouns or adjectives denoting attractive qualities. Sometimes a mother will be known by a matronymic, referring to her as the mother of her eldest child.

Karima	‘generous’	<i>kariima</i>	كريمة
Farida	‘incomparable’	<i>fariida</i>	فريدة
Afaf	‘chastity’	<i>ʿafaaf</i>	عفاف
Yasmine	‘jasmine’	<i>yaasamiin</i>	ياسمين
Susan	‘lily of the valley’	<i>sawsan</i>	سوسن

14.2.1.1 MATRONYMICS: Arabic uses teknonymics – names derived from a child’s given name. It is not uncommon for an Arab mother to acquire a female teknonym or matronymic once she has had a child.

Umm Hasan	Mother of Hasan	<i>ʿumm-u Hasan-in</i>	أم حسن
Umm Ahmad	Mother of Ahmad	<i>ʿumm-u Ahmad-a</i>	أم أحمد

14.2.2 Men’s given names

Men’s names include descriptive adjectives and nouns, but also include a wide selection of phrasal names. Here are just a few examples:

²² See Nydell 2002, 57–61, for a succinct description of Arab naming systems and traditions.

²³ See Badawi et al. 1991, for a comprehensive Arabic reference work on Arab names.

(1) **Adjectives:**

Sharif	'noble'	<i>shariif</i>	شريف
Karim	'generous'	<i>kariim</i>	كريم
Said	'happy'	<i>sa'iid</i>	سعيد

(2) **Nouns:**

Raad	'thunder'	<i>ra'd</i>	رعد
Leith	'lion'	<i>layth</i>	ليث
Fahd	'panther'	<i>fahd</i>	فهد

(3) **Participles:**

Mahmoud	'praised'	<i>maHmuud</i>	محمود
Adil	'just'	<i>'aadil</i>	عادل
Mukhtar	'chosen'	<i>muxtaar</i>	مختار

(4) **Nisba adjectives:**

Shukri	'thankful'	<i>shukriyy</i>	شكريّ
Lutfi	'kind'	<i>luTfiyy</i>	لطفيّ

(5) **Traditional Semitic names:** These are names shared within the Semitic languages and traditions.

Ibrahim (Abraham)	<i>'ibraahiim</i>	إبراهيم
Yusef (Joseph)	<i>yuusuf</i>	يوسف
Younis (Jonas)	<i>yuunus</i>	يونس
Suleiman (Solomon)	<i>sulaymaan</i>	سليمان
Musa (Moses)	<i>muusaa</i>	موسى

(6) **Inflected verbs:** These names are actually inflected verb forms:

Yazid	'he increases'	<i>ya-ziid</i>	يزيد
Ahmad	'I praise'	<i>'a-Hmad</i>	أحمد

(7) **Phrase names:** Arabic has phrasal names, usually in the form of construct phrases:

Aladdin	'nobility of the religion'	<i>'alaa' -u l-diin</i>	علاء الدين
Abdallah	'servant of God'	<i>'abd-u llaah</i>	عبد الله
Abdurahman	'servant of the merciful'	<i>'abd-u l-raHmaan</i>	عبد الرحمن

- (8) **Teknonymics:** The Arabic term for this kind of name is *kunya* كنية. It is common in many parts of the Arab world for a man to acquire a teknonym once he has had a child, especially a male child, and he is often known by the name of his first male child.

Abu Hassan	'Father of Hassan'	<i>ʾabuu Hasan-in</i>	أبو حسن
Abu Bakr	'Father of Bakr'	<i>ʾabuu bakr-in</i>	أبو بكر

- (9) **Patronymics:** A patronymic is a name derived from the father's given name:

Ibn Fadlan	'Son of Fadlan'	<i>ibn-u faDlaan</i>	ابن فضلان
Ibn Khaldoun	'Son of Khaldoun'	<i>ibn-u xalduun</i>	ابن خلدون
Ibn Saud	'Son of Saud'	<i>ibn-u saʿuud</i>	ابن سعود

15 Complex nouns, compound nouns, and compound nominals

(*naHt* نحت and *tarkiib* تركيب)

Sometimes there is a need to express semantically complex concepts in noun form. This area of noun formation in Arabic is not as clear-cut as the other areas. "The debate on compounding in Arabic has long been bedeviled by failure to define terms precisely and apply consistent criteria. There are two fundamental definitional problems: the term for compounding itself, and the status of the components of a compound" (Emery 1988, 34).

Here three categories are distinguished: complex nouns, compound nouns, and compound nominals (phrases). Complex nouns are created from parts of words fused into one word. Compound nouns are created by combining two full words into one, and compound nominals are phrases of two words that are used to refer to one concept. In general in Arabic, the term *naHt* refers to complex and compound nouns, whereas the term *tarkiib* refers to compound nominals.

15.1 Complex nouns

Complex nouns are created through fusing two (or more) word stems into one. This is called *naHt* (literally 'chiseling') in traditional Arabic grammar. There are several sub-processes or variations on this procedure, and although it is not common in traditional Arabic morphology, it tends to be used in MSA for recently coined items and for loan translations, especially technical terms.

15.1.1 Blending word segments into one word

In this process, parts of words are segmented and re-blended into a word that combines parts of two word stems:

boulder	<i>julmuud~jalmaḍ</i>	جلمود ~ جلمد
(from <i>jalida</i> جلد 'to freeze' and <i>jamuda</i> جمد 'to harden')		
supranationalism	<i>al-fawqawmiyya</i>	الفوقومية
(from <i>fawq-a</i> فوق 'above' and <i>qawmiyya</i> قومية 'nationalism')		
amphibian	<i>barmaa'iyy</i>	برمائي
(from <i>barr</i> بر 'land' and <i>maa</i> ماء 'water' with <i>nisba</i> suffix -iyy)		

15.1.2 Formula nouns

This word-formation process consists of using the initial letters or syllables of a string of words in a traditional, formulaic saying to create a quadriliteral noun, usually ending with a *taa'* *marbuuTa*.

<i>basmalah</i>	بسملة
the act of saying: <i>bi-ism-i llaah-i</i> باسم الله ('in the name of God')	
<i>Hawqalah</i>	حوقة
the act of saying: <i>laa Hawl-a wa-laa quwwat-a' illaa bi-llaah-i</i> لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله	
('There is no power and no strength save in God')	

15.2 Compound nouns

Compounding refers to combining two complete word stems into one syntactic unit. The classic MSA example is the word *ra's-maal* رأسمال 'capital' formed from conjoining the words *ra's* 'head' and *maal* 'money.'²⁴ Another example is *laa-markaziyya* لا مركزية for 'decentralization,' from the words *laa* 'no' and *markaziyya* 'centralization.' Other examples include:

invertebrate	<i>laa-faqaariyy</i> (‘no spinal column’)	لا فقاري
invertebrates	<i>al-laa-faqaariyyaat</i>	اللا فقاريات
petition, application	<i>‘arD-u-Haal</i> (‘presentation of situation’)	عرضحال
petitions	<i>‘ard-u-Haalaat</i>	عرضحالات
course of events	<i>maa jaraa</i> (‘what flows’)	ما جرى
courses of events	<i>maa jarayaat</i>	ما جريات
lottery	<i>yaa-naSiib</i> (‘O chance! O fate! O luck!’)	يا نصيب

²⁴ The plural of *ra's-maal* is found both as *rasaamiil* رساميل and as *ru'uus 'amwaal* رؤوس أموال.

the lottery	<i>al-yaa-naSiib</i>	اليا نصيب
lottery ticket	<i>waraqat-u yaa-nasiib</i>	ورقة يا نصيب

Note that compound nouns function as word stems and may receive plurals or definite articles.

15.3 Compound nominals: (*tarkib* تركيب): Coherent composite phrases

Sometimes the noun concept is not expressed as a single word in Arabic, but as a noun phrase, usually an *'iDaafa*, such as *'adam-u wujuud-in* وجود 'nonexistence' or *kiis-u hawaa'-in* كيس هواء 'airbag.' In such cases, the dual or plural is usually made by adding the dual suffix to or pluralizing the head noun, the first noun in the phrase.

bedroom	<i>ghurfat-u nawm-in</i>	غرفة نوم
two bedrooms	<i>ghurfat-aa nawm-in</i>	غرفتا نوم
bedrooms	<i>ghuraf-u nawm-in</i>	غرف نوم
reaction	<i>radd-u fi'l-in</i>	رد فعل
two reactions	<i>radd-aa fi'l-in</i>	ردا فعل
reactions:	<i>ruduud-u fi'l-in</i>	ردود فعل
passport	<i>jawaaz-u safar-in</i>	جواز سفر
two passports	<i>jawaaz-aa safar-in</i>	جوازا سفر
passports:	<i>jawaazaat-u safar-in</i>	جوازات سفر

Examples:

کرد فعل للاعتداءات	خمس غرف نوم
<i>ka-radd-i fi'l-in li-l-i' tidaa' aat-i</i>	<i>xams-u ghuraf-i nawm-in</i>
as a reaction to the attacks	five bedrooms

Participles: active and passive

Arabic participles are descriptive words derived from particular stem classes, or Forms, of a verbal root. The **active participle** (*ism al-faaʿil* اسم الفاعل) describes the doer of an action and the **passive participle** (*ism al-mafʿul* اسم المفعول) describes the entity that receives the action, or has the action done to it.¹ Arabic participles therefore describe or refer to entities involved in an activity, process, or state.

Arabic participles are based on a distinction in **voice**: they are either active or passive. This contrasts with English, where participles are based on **tense** (present or past) and are used as components of compound verb forms. Arabic participles are **not** used in the formation of compound verb tenses.²

In form, participles are substantives, that is they inflect as nouns or adjectives (for case, definiteness, gender, number).³ In terms of their **function**, however, they may serve as nouns, adjectives, adverbs or even verb substitutes.⁴ As Beeston notes (1970, 34), “it may be impossible when quoting a word out of context to assert that it is either [substantive or adjective], this being determinable only by the syntactic context.” This is particularly true for Arabic participles. They are distinguishable by their form, but their syntactic functions are multiple.⁵

¹ According to Holes (1995, 122) “The basic difference between the two types of participle is that the active describes the state in which the subject of the verb from which it is derived finds itself as a result of the action or event which the verb describes, while the passive refers to the state in which the object or complement of the verb from which it is derived finds itself after the completion of the action/event.”

² “The participles have no fixed time reference – this has to be interpreted from the context” (Holes, 1995, 122). Also, as Kouloughli states in this context, “Il est plus éclairant de penser que le participe actif renvoie au sujet du verbe actif alors que le participe passif renvoie, lui, au sujet du verbe passif” (1994, 217) rather than associating either participle with any sort of temporal notion.

³ Lecomte (1968, 95) refers to Arabic participles as “the hinge between the verb and the noun” (“la charnière entre le verbe et le nom”) because of their noun form combined with verbal qualities.

⁴ “The active participle can function syntactically as a noun, verb or attributive adjective . . . while the passive participle is often used predicatively as quasi-verbal adjective to indicate the result or present relevance of a completed action” (Holes, 1995, 122–23).

⁵ The description of Arabic participles varies substantially because of their wide-ranging functional nature. For example, they are referred to by Depuydt (1997, 494) as “adjectival verb forms,” whereas Beeston (1970, 35) states that “the participle is a noun (substantive or adjective) which like the verbal abstract [i.e., verbal noun], matches the verb.” Arabic grammar classifies both nouns and adjectives under the term *ism* ‘noun; name’ and thus refers to the participles as *ism al-faaʿil* and *ism al-mafʿul*.

The meanings of active and passive participles are directly related to their descriptive nature and the verb from which they derive. However, within that semantic range participles have a wide range of meanings. “Many words which have the pattern of a participle contain highly specialized senses within their semantic spectrum, in addition to the fundamental value” (Beeston 1970, 35).

The derivational rules for participles are described in greater detail in the chapters on the individual forms (I–X, XI–XV, and quadriliteral).

1 Active participle (AP): (*ism al-faaʿ il* اسم الفاعل)

When an active participle is used as a substantive to refer to the doer of an action, often the English equivalent would be a noun ending in /-er/ or /-or/, such as ‘inspector’ or ‘teacher.’ In Arabic, the term for ‘teacher’ (*mudarris* مدرس), for example, is an active participle, as is the term for ‘visitor’ (*zaaʿir* زائر). As a noun, when the AP refers to or describes a human being, it takes the natural gender of the person; when referring to something abstract, it may be either masculine or feminine. Also as a noun, it will take a particular form of the plural, which is not always predictable.

Used as an adjective, the active participle acts as a descriptive term, as, for example, the AP *jaaff* ‘dry’ in the phrase *jaww-un jaaff-un* ‘dry air.’ It may also correspond to an English adjective ending in /-ing/, such as the Form VIII AP *mubtasim* ‘smiling’ in the phrase *bint-un mubtasimat-un*, ‘a smiling girl.’ As a predicate adjective, it may serve as a verb substitute. For example, using the Form III AP *musaaḥḥir* ‘traveling’: *huwa musaaḥḥir-un* ‘He is traveling.’⁶

The active participle (AP) can be derived from any form (stem class) of Arabic verbs, from I–X. AP’s can be derived from quadriliteral verbs as well as triliteral. They describe the doer of the action.⁷ They have predictable and distinctive forms.

1.1 Form I AP

The pattern of the active participle in Form I of the triliteral verb is *CaaCic* (*faaʿil* فاعل). This pattern shows slight modification when used with irregular root types, as described in Chapter 22, section 10.

1.1.1 Form I AP nouns

APs that refer to human beings take either a sound plural or a plural of the *fuʿaal* pattern. The nonhuman AP noun may be masculine or feminine and it may take the sound feminine plural or a broken plural, usually *fawaaʿil*.

⁶ Note, however, the temporal and aspectual ambiguity of the AP in context. It may refer to a state of current activity, or of having accomplished a certain activity. As Depuydt notes, “the inability to distinguish unambiguously between simultaneity and anteriority may occasionally be an impediment to using a participle” (1997, 494).

⁷ In terms of meaning, note that an active participle (e.g., *raad-in* ‘satisfied’ from *raDiya* ‘to be satisfied’) may have an English equivalent that ends in /-ed/, but it is still an active participle.

Strong/regular root: *faaʿil* فاعِل

guard/s	Haaris/Hurraas	حارس / حُرَّاس
researcher/s	baaHith/-uuna	باحث / باحثون
rider/s; passenger/s	raakib/rukkaab	راكب / رُكَّاب
coast/s; shore/s	saaHil/sawaaHil	ساحل / سَوَاحِل
floor/s; storey/ies ⁸	Taabiq/Tawaabiq	طابق / طَوَاقِب
side/s	jaanib/jawaanib	جانب / جَوَانِب
rule/s; base/s	qaaʿ ida/qawaaʿid	قاعدة / قَوَاعِد
fruit/s	faakiha/fawaakih	فاكهة / فَوَاكِه
university/ies	jaamiʿa/-aat	جامعة / جامِعَات

Geminate root:

material/s	maadda/mawaadd ⁹	مادة / مَوَادِّ
pilgrim/s	Haajj/Hujjaaj~Hajjij	حاج / حُجَّاج ~ حجيج

Hamzated root:

reader/s	qaariʿ/qurraaʿ	قارئ / قُرَّاء
accident/s; emergency/ies	Taariʿa/Tawaariʿ	طارئة / طَوَارِئ

Assimilated root:

mother/s	waalida/-aat	والدة / وَالِدَات
father/s	waalid/-uuna	والد / وَالِدُونَ
import/s	waarid/-aat	وارد / وَارِدَات
duty/ies; homework	waajib/-aat	واجب / وَاجِبَات

Hollow root:

visitor/s	zaaʿir/zuwwaar	زائر / زُوَّار
leader/s	qaaʿid/quwwaad	قائد / قَوَّاد
fluid/s; liquid/s	saaʿil/sawaaʿil	سائل / سَوَائِل
being/s	kaaʿin/-aat	كائن / كَائِنَات

⁸ Of a building. Also pronounced *Taabaq*.⁹ The plural *mawaadd* is the form that the plural pattern *fawaaʿil* takes in geminate nouns because of the phonological restriction on sequences that include a vowel between identical consonants.**mawaadid* → *mawaadd*.

menu/s; list/s	<i>qaa'ima/-aat~qawa'im</i>	قائِم/قائِمات ~ قوائِم
circle/s; department/s	<i>daa'ira/dawaa'ir</i>	دائِرة/دوائِر

Defective root:

judge/s	<i>qaaD-in/quDaah</i>	قاضٍ/قُضاة
club/s	<i>naad-in/nawaadin</i>	نادٍ/نواِد
corner/s	<i>zaawiya/zawaayaa</i>	زاوية/زوايا

Examples of Form I APs as nouns in context:

الوالدة والمولود في خير.	النادي العربي
<i>al-waalidat-u wa-l-mawluud-u fii xayr-in</i>	<i>al-naadii l-ʿarabiyy-u</i>
Mother and child are well ('in goodness').	the Arabic club

ناطق باسم الملكة
naaTiq-un bi-ism-i l-malikat-i
 a spokesman in the name of the queen

1.1.2 Form I APs as adjectives

APs functioning as adjectives reflect the gender of the noun that they modify. In context they may function either as noun modifiers or predicate adjectives.

Strong/regular root:

able, capable	<i>qaabil</i>	قابِل	former	<i>saabiq</i>	سابق
frowning; stern	<i>ʿaabis</i>	عابِس	unable	<i>ʿaajiz</i>	عاجِز
ruling	<i>Haakim</i>	حاكِم	next, coming	<i>qaadim</i>	قادم

Assimilated root:

wide, broad	<i>waasiʿ</i>	واسِع	clear	<i>waaDiH</i>	واضح
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Geminate root:

This form of AP creates a unique monosyllabic stem consisting of a long vowel followed by a doubled consonant: CVVCC.¹⁰

dry	<i>jaaff</i>	جافّ	harmful	<i>Daarr</i>	ضارّ
important	<i>haamm</i>	هامّ	special; private	<i>xaaSS</i>	خاصّ
hot	<i>Haarr</i>	حارّ	poisonous	<i>saamm</i>	سامّ

¹⁰ See also Chapter 2, note 34.

Hamzated root:

sorry, regretful	^ʔ aasif	آسِف	calm, peaceful	haadi ^ʔ	هَادِي
final; last	^ʔ aaxir ¹¹	آخِر			

Hollow root:

visiting	zaa ^ʔ ir	زَائِر	frightful; amazing	haa ^ʔ il	هَائِل
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Defective root:

growing	naam-in	نَام	satisfied; pleased	raaD-in	رَاضِي
high	^ʕ aal-in	عَال	last; past	maaD-in	مَاضِي
remaining	baaq-in	بَاقٍ			

Examples of APs in context as adjectives:

الثلاثاء الماضي
al-thulaathaa^ʔ-a l-maaDiy-a
 last Tuesday

المرّة القادمة
al-marrat-a l-qaadimat-a
 the next time

المشاريع الباقية
al-mashaarii^ʕ-u l-baaqiyat-u
 the remaining projects

الاستخدام الضارّ بالبيئة
al-istixdaam-u l-Daarr-u bi-l-bii^ʔat-i
 use injurious to the environment

آخر التطورات
^ʔaaxir-u l-taTawwuraat-i
 the latest developments

المعلومات اللازمة
al-ma^ʕluumaat-u l-laazimat-u
 the necessary information

الوثب العالي
al-wathab-u l-^ʕaalii
 the high jump
 وزير الاقتصاد الأردني السابق
waziir-u l-iqtiSaad-i l-^ʔurduniyy-u
l-saabiq-u
 the former Jordanian minister of
 economy

قال المدرب إنه راضٍ.
qaal-a l-mudarrib-u ^ʔinna-hu raaD-in.
 The coach said that he was satisfied.

يفتح مجالات واسعة.
ya-ftaH-u majaalaat-in waasi^ʕat-an.
 It opens wide fields.

الخلفاء الراشدون
al-xulafaa^ʔ-u l-raashid-uuna
 the orthodox caliphs

في قائمة الدول الداعمة للإرهاب
fii qaa^ʔimat-i l-duwal-i l-daa^ʕimat-i
li-l-^ʔirhaab-i
 on the list of countries supporting
 terrorism

¹¹ From the hamzated root ^ʔ-x-r; the initial hamza followed by the long /aa/ of the faa'il pattern create /^ʔaa/, spelled with ^ʔalif madda.

1.1.3 Identical noun and adjective AP

It may happen that the AP for a particular verb is used both as a noun and as an adjective. In that case, they look identical in the singular, but the plurals usually differ.

1.1.3.1 AP NOUN PLURAL: The Form I AP masculine human noun takes a broken plural of the form (*fu^caal* فُعَال). The feminine human noun takes the sound feminine plural.

visitor/s (m.)	zaa ³ ir/zuwwaar	زَائِر/زَوَار
visitor/s (f.)	zaa ³ ira/-aat	زَائِرَة/زَائِرَات
worker/s (m.)	^c aamil/ ^c ummaal	عَامِل/عُمَال
worker/s (f.)	^c aamila/-aat	عَامِلَة/عَامِلَات
writer/s (m.)	kaatib/kuttaab	كَاتِب/كُتَّاب
writer/s (f.)	kaatiba/-aat	كَاتِبَة/كَاتِبَات
ruler/s (m.)	Haakim/Hukkaam	حَاكِم/حُكَّام
ruler/s (f.)	Haakima/-aat	حَاكِمَة/حَاكِمَات

1.1.3.2 AP ADJECTIVE PLURAL: The Form I AP adjective takes the sound masculine or the sound feminine plural if it modifies or refers to a human plural noun.

visiting	zaa ³ ir/-uuna~zaa ³ ira/-aat	زَائِر/زَائِرُونَ ~ زَائِرَة/زَائِرَات
working	^c aamil/-uuna~ ^c aamila/-aat	عَامِل/عَامِلُونَ ~ عَامِلَة/عَامِلَات
writing	kaatib/-uuna~kaatiba/-aat	كَاتِب/كَاتِبُونَ ~ كَاتِبَة/كَاتِبَات
ruling	Haakim/-uuna/~Haakima/-aat	حَاكِم/حَاكِمُونَ ~ حَاكِمَة/حَاكِمَات

1.2 Derived form active participles (II–X)

As with Form I, the derived form AP may refer to humans or nonhuman entities and may function either as a noun or adjective, many of them doing double-duty. When referring to or denoting human beings, the plural is either masculine sound plural or feminine sound plural, depending on the natural gender of the head noun.

If, however, the participle noun refers to a nonhuman entity, such as *muxaddir* مَخْدِر 'drug,' its plural is sound feminine plural, *muxaddir-aat* مَخْدِرَات 'drugs.'

1.2.1 Form II AP: *mufa^cil* مَفْعِل

coordinator	munassiq/-uuna	مُنَسِّق/مُنَسِّقُونَ
inspector	mufattish/-uuna	مُفَتِّش/مُفَتِّشُونَ

teacher	mudarris/-uuna	مُدَرِّس / مُدَرِّسُون
hors d'oeuvres	muqabbilaat ¹²	مُقَبَّلَات
drug, narcotic	muxaddir/-aat	مُخَدِّرَات / مُخَدِّر
note; reminder	mudhakkira/-aat	مُذَكِّرَات / مُذَكِّر
historian	mu'arrix /-uuna	مُؤَرِّخ / مُؤَرِّخُون
distinctive feature; characteristic	mumayyiza/-aat	مُمَيِّزَات / مُمَيِّز
singer	mughann-in/mughannuuna	مُغَنِّن / مُغَنِّنُون
person praying	muSall-in/muSalluuna	مُصَلِّ / مُصَلِّون

Form II AP's in context:

عدد من المؤرخين العرب	عدسة مكبرة
'adad-un min-a l-mu'arrix-iina l-'arab-i	'adasat-un mukabbirat-un
a number of Arab historians	magnifying glass ('lense')

منسق نشاطات الأمم المتحدة
munassiq-u nashaaT-aat-i l-'umam-i l-muttaHidat-i
coordinator of the activities of the United Nations

1.2.2 Form III AP: *mufaa'il* مُفَاعِل

assistant	musaa'id	مُسَاعِد	citizen	muwaaTin	مُوَاطِن
lecturer	muHaaDir	مُحَاضِر	on duty	munaawib	مُنَاوِب
lawyer	muHaam-in	مُحَام	traveler/traveling	musaafir	مُسَافِر
observer	muraaqib	مُرَاقِب	neutral	muHaayid	مُحَايِد

Form III APs in context:

ابني مسافر.	دولة محايدة
ibn-ii musaafir-un.	dawlat-un muHaayidat-un
My son is traveling.	a neutral country

1.2.3 Form IV AP: *muf'il* مُفْعِل

Muslim	muslim	مُسْلِم	rainy	mumTir	مُمَطِّر
ocean	muHiiT	مُحِيط	snowy	muthlij	مُثَلِّج

¹² This expression usually occurs in the plural.

manager	mudiir	مُدِيرٌ	boring	mumill	مُمِلٌّ
sunny	mushmis	مُشْمِسٌ	possible	mumkin	مُمْكِنٌ

Form IV APs in context:

الأيام المشمسة al-'ayyaam-u l-mushmisat-u the sunny days	شيء مؤسف جداً shay ² -un mu ² sif-un jidd-an a very distressing thing
أقرب وقت ممكن 'aqrab-a waqt-in mumkin-in the soonest possible time	المحيط الأطلسي al-muHiiT-u l-'aTlasiyy-u the Atlantic Ocean
اللجنة المشرفة al-lajnat-u l-mushrifat-u the supervisory committee	النسائم المنعشة al-nasaa'im-u l-mun ^c ishat-u the refreshing breezes

1.2.4 Form V AP: muta^{cc}il متَفَعِّلٌ

volunteer	mutaTawwi ^c	مُتَطَوِّعٌ	sorry	muta ² assif	مُتَأَسِّفٌ
specialist	mutaxaSSiS	مُتَخَصِّصٌ	abundant	mutawaffir	مُتَوَفِّرٌ
extremist	mutaTarriF	مُتَطَرِّفٌ	diverse, various	mutanawwi ^c	مُتَنَوِّعٌ

Note that some Form V APs can have passive meanings:

married	mutazawwij	مُتَزَوِّجٌ
late; delayed	muta ² axxir	مُتَأَخِّرٌ
frozen	mutajammid	مُتَجَمِّدٌ

Form V APs in context:

تثير حماس المتفرجين.
tu-thiir-u Hamaas-a l-mutafarrij-iina.

It arouses the excitement of the spectators.

المتحدث باسم الحكومة
al-mutaHaddith-u bi-sm-i l-Hukuumat-i
the spokesperson in the name of the government

المحيط المتجمد الشمالي
al-muHiiT-u l-mutajammid-u l-shimaaliyy-u
the Arctic Ocean ('the frozen northern ocean')

1.2.5 Form VI AP: *mutafaa'il* مُتَفَاعِلٌ

successive	<i>mutataal-in</i>	مُتَتَالٍ	equal, commensurate	<i>mutakaafi'</i>	مُتَكَافٍ
increasing	<i>mutazaayid</i>	مُتَزَايِدٍ	optimistic	<i>mutafaa'il</i>	مُتَفَائِلٍ
scattered	<i>mutanaathir</i>	مُتَنَاطِرٍ	pessimistic	<i>mutashaa'im</i>	مُتَشَائِمٍ

Form VI APs in context:

سنوات متتالية
sanawaat-un mutataaliyat-un
successive years

علب متناثرة
'ilab-un mutanaathirat-un
scattered containers

الاهتمام المتزايد بالإسلام
al-ihtimaam-u l-mutazaayid-u bi-l-'islaam-i
the increasing interest in Islam

مباراة متكافئة
mubaaraat-un mutakaafi'at-un
an equal contest

1.2.6 Form VII AP: *munfa'il* مُنْفَعِلٌ

No noun forms were encountered in the data, only adjectival APs of Form VII:

sliding	<i>munzaliq</i>	مُنْزَلِقٌ	isolated	<i>mun'azil</i>	مُنْعَزِلٌ
originating	<i>munbathiq</i>	مُنْبَثِقٌ	notched, indented	<i>munba'ij</i>	مُنْبَعِجٌ

باب منزلق
baab-un munzaliq-un
a sliding door

1.2.7 Form VIII AP: *mufṭa'il* مُفْتَعِلٌ

listener	<i>mustami'</i>	مُسْتَمِعٌ	respectful	<i>muHtarim</i>	مُحْتَرِمٌ
waiting	<i>muntaZir</i>	مُنْتَظِرٌ	smiling	<i>mubtasim</i>	مُبْتَسِمٌ
agreeing	<i>muttafiq</i>	مُتَّفِقٌ	moderate	<i>mu'tadil</i>	مُعْتَدِلٌ

1.2.7.1 FORM VIII AP WITH PP MEANING: A Form VIII AP may occasionally have the meaning of a passive participle:

full of; filled with	<i>mumtali'</i> (bi-)	مُمْتَلِئٌ (بِ)
united	<i>muttaHid</i>	مُتَّحِدٌ
hidden	<i>muxtabi'</i>	مُخْتَبِئٌ

Form VIII APs in context:

الأمم المتحدة <i>al-ʔumam-u l-muttaHidat-u</i> the United Nations	لإرضاء مختلف الأذواق <i>li-ʔirDaaʔ-i muxtalif-i l-ʔadhwaaq-i</i> in order to please various tastes
الفتاة المبتسمة <i>al-fataat-u l-mubtasimat-u</i> the smiling girl	خصمك مختبئ <i>xaSm-u-ka muxtabiʔ-un</i> Your adversary is hidden.

1.2.8 Form IX AP: *mufʿal* مُفْعَل

The Form IX APs are rare.

1.2.9 Form X AP: *mustafʿil* مُسْتَفْعِل

orientalist	<i>mustashriq</i> مُسْتَشْرِقْ	consumer; user	<i>mustaxdim</i> مُسْتَخْدِمْ
continuous	<i>mustamirr</i> مُسْتَمِرْ	impossible	<i>mustaHiil</i> مُسْتَحِيلْ
circular	<i>mustadiir</i> مُسْتَدِيرْ		

Form X APs in context:

بصفة مستمرة <i>bi-Sifat-in mustamirratin</i> in a continuous way; continuously	ساحة مستديرة <i>saaHat-un mustadiirat-un</i> a circular courtyard
ثلاثة مستحيلات <i>thalaathat-u mustaHiilaat-in</i> three impossible [things]	لكل مستخدم <i>li-kull-i mustaxdim-in</i> for every consumer

1.3 Quadriliteral APs

Quadriliteral APs may function as nouns or adjectives. As with the derived-form triliteral-based APs, quadriliteral AP nouns, when referring to human beings, take the sound masculine or feminine plural, according to natural gender; when referring to nonhuman entities, the sound feminine plural is used.

Form I: *mufaʿil* مُفَاعِلْ

engineer/s	<i>muhandis-uuna</i> مِهْنَدِسْ / مِهْنَدِسُونْ
translator/s	<i>mutarjim-uuna</i> مُتَرْجِمْ / مُتَرْجِمُونْ
explosive/s	<i>mufarqiʿ / mufarqiʿaat</i> مُفَرِّقْ / مُفَرِّقَاتْ

Form II: *mutafaʿil* مُتَفَعِّل

deteriorating	<i>mutadahwir</i>	مُتَدَهْوِرٌ
profound; far-reaching	<i>mutaghalghil</i>	مُتَغَلْغَلٌ

Form IV: *mufʿalill* مُفْعَلِّل

serene, calm	<i>muTmaʿinn</i>	مُطْمَئِنٌّ
vanishing	<i>muDmaHill</i>	مُضْمَحِلٌّ
dusky, gloomy	<i>mukfahirr</i>	مُكْفَهِّرٌ

Quadriliteral APs in context:

هم في حال صحة متدهورة. <i>hum fii Haal-i SiHHat-in mutadahwirat-in.</i> They are in a deteriorating state of health.	خبراء المفرقات <i>xubaraaʿ-u l-mufarqi ʿaat-i</i> explosives experts
--	--

1.4 Special functions of APs

The active participle has a wide range of syntactic functions in Arabic. As noted, it may serve as a noun or adjective. As a predicate of an equational sentence, it may function to indicate a verb-like action:

هو مسافر. <i>huwa musaafir-un.</i> He is traveling/has gone traveling.	الطلاب زائرون. <i>al-Tullaab-u zaaʿir-uuna.</i> The students are visiting.
أنا فاهم. <i>ʿanaa faahim-un.</i> I understand ('I am understanding').	

1.4.2 The *Haal* حال construction

A particular adverbial function of active participles is their use in the *Haal* or circumstantial accusative construction. The active participle is used to describe additional circumstances of a verbal action, coordinating a state or circumstances with the action denoted by the verb. The AP used in the *Haal* structure agrees with the doer or sometimes with the object of the action in number and gender, but is always in the accusative case.

دخل الصف متأخراً. <i>daxal-a l-Saff-a mutaʿaxxir-an.</i> He entered the classroom late.

دخلوا البلد بالباخرة قادمين من الجزائر.

daxal-aa l-balad-a bi-l-baaxirat-i qaadim-ayni min-a l-jazaa'ir-i.

They (two) entered the country by ship, coming from Algeria.

انطلقوا عائدين إلى بيوتهم.

inTalaq-uu 'aa' id-iina 'ilaa buyuut-i-him.

They departed, returning to their houses.

1.4.2.1 AP + NOUN OBJECT: If the *Haal* AP is from a transitive verb, it may take an object in the accusative case:

عاد إلى القاهرة حاملا رسالة من الزعيم الليبي.

'aad-a 'ilaa l-qaahirat-i Haamil-an risaalat-an min-a l-za'uum-i l-liibiyy-i.

He returned to Cairo carrying a letter from the Libyan leader.

وألقى الوزير كلمة ناقلا تحيات الرئيس.

wa-'alqaa l-waziir-u kalimat-an naaqil-an taHiyyaat-i l-ra'is-i.

The minister gave a speech transmitting the greetings of the president.

For further discussion of the *Haal* construction, see Chapter 11, section 2.3.1.

2 Passive participle (PP): *ism al-maf'ul* اسم المفعول

Like the active participle, the passive participle (PP) can be derived from any Form (stem class) of Arabic verbs, from I-X, and PPs can be formed from quadriliteral verbs as well as triliteral. In general, in order to have a passive participle a verb should be transitive, i.e., able to take an object complement or direct object, inasmuch as PPs describe the state of the object of the action.

Passive participles acting as nouns often correspond to English nouns ending in /-ee/ 'employee' (*muwaZZaf* مَوْظَّف), or they may correspond to an English past/passive participle (e.g., *maktuub* مكتوب 'written').¹³ However, a second important function of the PPs of derived verb forms (II-X) and quadriliterals is to function as nouns of time and place, so the requirement for transitivity is not always met. These include, for example, the nouns *mustashfan* مُسْتَشْفَى 'hospital' (X PP), *muxtabar* مُخْتَبَر 'laboratory' (VIII PP), and *mu'askar* مَعْسَكَر 'camp' (Quad. I PP).

2.1 Form I passive participle: *maf'ul* مفعول

This form of the PP describes the result of an action, whether it functions as a noun or an adjective. It may take a broken plural or the sound feminine plural if

¹³ A good description of both present and past participles in English is found in Hurford 1994, 157–60 and 195–98. Note especially his description of the contrast between the English past participle and the Arabic passive participle, p. 159.

it refers to a nonhuman entity, and the sound masculine plural if it refers to human males.

Form I PP noun:

concept/s	<i>mafhuum/mafaahiim</i>	مَفْهُوم / مَفَاهِيم
group/s	<i>majmuu^ca/-aat</i>	مَجْمُوعَة / مَجْمُوعَات
plan/s	<i>mashruu^c/-aat~ mashaarii^c</i>	مَشْرُوع / مَشْرُوعَات ~ مَشَارِيع
manuscript/s	<i>maxTuut/-aat¹⁴</i>	مَخْطُوط / مَخْطُوطَات
implication/s	<i>madluul/-aat</i>	مَدْلُول / مَدْلُولَات
topic/s	<i>mawDuu^c/mawDuu^caat~ mawaaDii^c</i>	مَوْضُوع / مَوْضُوعَات ~ مَوَاضِيع
creature/s	<i>maxluuq/-aat</i>	مَخْلُوق / مَخْلُوقَات
sound/s	<i>masmuu^c/-aat</i>	مَسْمُوع / مَسْمُوعَات
prisoner/s	<i>masjuun/-uuna</i>	مَسْجُون / مَسْجُونُونَ

PP adjective:

known	<i>ma^cruuf</i>	مَعْرُوف	busy	<i>mashghuul</i>	مَشْغُول
blessed	<i>mabruuk</i>	مَبْرُوك	forbidden	<i>mamnuu^c</i>	مَنْعُوع

2.1.2 Form I PPs in context

في منشوراتها هذه	الوالدة والمولود في خير.
<i>fii manshuuraat-i-haa haadhihi</i>	<i>al-waalidat-u wa-l-mawluud-u fii xayr-in.</i>
in these of its publications	Mother and [new]born are well.

الجهود المبذولة لإعادة السلام
al-juhuud-u l-mabdhuulat-u li-³ i^caadat-i l-salaam-i
 the efforts exerted to re-establish peace

2.2 Derived form passive participles II–X

As nouns, these participles usually take sound plurals when referring to human beings. When referring to nonhuman entities, the sound feminine plural is usually used. Passive participles are less likely to occur in the reflexive/reciprocal and intransitive Forms V, VI, VII, and IX. Note that PPs as nouns of time and place are especially frequent in Forms VII–X.

¹⁴ The singular occurs both as *maxTuut* مَخْطُوط and as *maxTuutTa* مَخْطُوطَة.

2.2.1 Form II PP: *mufa^{cc}al* مَفْعَلٌ

Nouns:

organization	<i>munaZZama</i>	مَنْظَمَةٌ	square	<i>murabba^c</i>	مُرَبَّعٌ
volume (book)	<i>mujallad</i>	مَجْلَدٌ	employee	<i>muwaZZaf</i>	مُوَظَّفٌ
triangle	<i>muthallath</i>	مُثَلَّثٌ	authorized agent	<i>mufawwaD</i>	مَفْوُضٌ

Adjectives:

illustrated	<i>muSawwar</i>	مُصَوِّرٌ	complicated	<i>mu^caqqaD</i>	مُعَقَّدٌ
preferred; favorite	<i>mufaDDal</i>	مُفَضَّلٌ	cultured	<i>muthaqqaf</i>	مُتَقَفٌّ
			armed	<i>musallaH</i>	مُسَلَّحٌ

2.2.1.1 FORM II PPs IN CONTEXT:

مفوض الشركة <i>mufawwaD-u l-sharikat-i</i> the company agent	إلى العنف المسلح <i>‘ilaa l-‘unfi l-musallaH-i</i> to armed force
لمجرد إثبات <i>li-mujarrad-i ‘ithbaat-in</i> for mere proof	في الميعاد المحدد <i>fii l-mii^caad-i l-muHaddad-i</i> at the designated time

2.2.2 Form III PP: *mufaa^cal* مُفَاعَلٌ

addressed, spoken to	<i>muxaaTab</i>	مُخَاطَبٌ
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2.2.3 Form IV PP: *muf^cal* مَفْعَلٌ

attaché	<i>mulHaq/uuna</i>	مُلْحَقٌ / مُلْحَقُونَ
lexicon	<i>mu^cjam/ma^caajim</i>	مُعْجَمٌ / مَعَاجِمٌ
compact/ed	<i>mudmaj</i>	مُدْمَجٌ
cast; seamless	<i>mufragh</i>	مُفْرَغٌ
disused; disregarded	<i>muhmal</i>	مُهْمَلٌ

2.2.3.1 FORM IV PPs IN CONTEXT:

الملحق العسكري <i>al-mulHaq-u l-‘askariyy-u</i> the military attaché	قرص مدمج <i>qurS-un mudmaj-un</i> a compact disk
--	--

حلقة مفرغة	أشياء قديمة مهملة
Halqat-un mufraghat-un	^ʔ ashyaa ^ʔ -u qadiimat-un muhmalat-un
a vicious circle	old, disused things

2.2.4 Form V PP: *mutafa^ʿal* مُتَفَاعَلٌ

change	mutaghayyar	متغير	expected;	mutawaqqa ^ʿ	متوقع
			anticipated		

مضوا وقتاً أكثر من المتوقع.
 maDaw waqt-an ^ʔakthar-a min-a l-mutawaqqa^ʿ-i.
 They spent more time than expected.

2.2.5 Form VI PP: *mutafaa^ʿal* مُتَفَاعَلٌ

The form VI PPs are rare.

2.2.6 Form VII PP: *munfa^ʿal* مُنْفَعَلٌ

These usually occur as nouns of place or time:

slope/s	munHadar/-aat	مُنْحَضَرٌ / مُنْحَضِرَاتٌ
lowland/s	munxafaD/-aat	مُنْخَفَضٌ / مُنْخَفَضَاتٌ
end of the month	munsalax ¹⁵	مُنْسَلَخٌ

2.2.7 Form VIII PP: *mufta^ʿal* مُفْتَعَلٌ

When they occur as nouns, the Form VIII PPs sometimes denote nouns of place.

level/s	mustawan/-ayaat	مُسْتَوٍ / مُسْتَوِيَاتٌ
content/s	muHtawan/-ayaat	مُحْتَوٍ / مُحْتَوِيَاتٌ
society/s	mujtama ^ʿ /-aat	مُجْتَمَعٌ / مُجْتَمَعَاتٌ
mid-point; half way	muntaSaf/-aat	مُنْتَصَفٌ / مُنْتَصِفَاتٌ
technical term/s	muSTalaH/-aat	مُصْطَلَحٌ / مُصْطَلَحَاتٌ
elected	muntaxab	مُنْتَخَبٌ / مُنْتَخِبُونَ
chosen	muxtaar	مُخْتَارٌ / مُخْتَارُونَ
occupied	muHtall	مُحْتَلٌ

¹⁵ Literally 'sloughed off, detached.'

2.2.7.1 FORM VIII PPs IN CONTEXT:

الأراضي المحتلة	في منتصف الليل
<i>al-ʔaraaDii l-muHtallat-u</i>	<i>fii muntaSaf-i l-layl-i</i>
the occupied lands	at midnight

Sometimes an AP of Form VIII will have a passive connotation, e.g.,

الولايات المتحدة
<i>al-wilaayaat-u l-muttaHidat-u</i>
the United States

2.2.8 Form IX PP: *mufʿal* مَفْعَلٌ

greened	<i>muxDarr</i>	مَخْضَرٌ
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2.2.9 Form X PP: *mustafʿal* مُسْتَفْعَلٌ

future/s	<i>mustaqbal/-aat</i>	مُسْتَقْبَلٌ / مُسْتَقْبَلَاتٌ
hospital/s	<i>mustashfan/-ayaat</i>	مُسْتَشْفَى / مُسْتَشْفَيَاتٌ
warehouse/s	<i>mustawdaʿ/-aat</i>	مُسْتَوْدَعٌ / مُسْتَوْدَعَاتٌ
counselor/s	<i>mustashaar/-uuna</i>	مُسْتَشَارٌ / مُسْتَشَارُونَ
imported	<i>mustawrad</i>	مُسْتَوْرَدٌ
borrowed	<i>mustaʿaar</i>	مُسْتَعَارٌ

2.2.9.1 FORM X PPs IN CONTEXT:

أسماء مستعارة	عطور مستوردة
<i>ʔasmaaʔ-un mustaʿaarat-un</i>	<i>ʔuTuur-un mustawradat-un</i>
pseudonyms ('borrowed names')	imported essences

أحد مستشاري الرئيس
<i>ʔaHad-u mustashaar-ii l-raʔiis-i</i>
one of the president's counselors

2.3 Quadriliteral PPs

Passive participles of quadriliteral verbs tend to occur chiefly in Forms I and II.

2.3.1 Form I QPP: *mufaʿlal* مَفْعَلَلٌ

camp	<i>muʿaskar</i>	مَعَسَكَرٌ	flattened	<i>mufarTaH</i>	مَفْرَطَحٌ
series	<i>musalsal</i>	مُسَلْسَلٌ	embellished	<i>muzarkash</i>	مُزَرَكَشٌ
old-timer	<i>muxaDram</i>	مَخْضَرَمٌ	crystallized	<i>mubalwar</i>	مُبْلُورٌ

2.3.2 Form II QPP: *mutafa'ial* مُتَفَعِّلٌ

This form is rare.

2.3.3 Quadriliteral PPs in context

مسلسل جديد

musalsal-un jadiid-un

a new series

أما المخضمة فقد جاءت رابعة.

°ammaa l-muxaDramat-u, fa-qad jaa'-at raabi'at-an.

As for the old-timer, she came in fourth.

لسكان الريف المبعثرين

li-sukkaan-i l-riif- l-muba'thar-iina

to the scattered country dwellers

المقالات المترجمة

al-maqaalaat-u l-mutarjamat-u

the translated articles

2.4 PP nouns in the plural

Certain PP nouns are used idiomatically in the plural. They refer to collective inanimate entities (often prepared foods), take the sound feminine plural, and include items such as the following:

edibles; foods	PP I <i>ma'kuulaat</i>	مأكولات
refreshments	PP I <i>mashruubaat</i>	مشروبات
grilled [meats]	PP I <i>mashwiyyaat</i>	مشويات
information	PP I <i>ma'luumaat</i>	معلومات
canned [goods]	PP II <i>mu'allabaat</i>	معلبات
nuts	PP II <i>mukassaraat</i>	مكسرات
variety; mixture	PP II <i>munawwa'aat</i>	منوعات
products	PP IV <i>muntajaat</i>	منتجات
selections	PP VIII <i>muxtaaraat</i>	مختارات

Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

Five inflectional features characterize Arabic nouns: **gender**, **humanness**, **number**, **definiteness**, and **case**. **Gender** and **humanness** are inherent in the noun; **number** and **definiteness** are determined semantically by the nature of the specific noun referent in context, and **case** is determined by the syntactic role of the noun (e.g., subject of the verb, object of a preposition) in a clause. Every Arabic noun in context manifests these five features, and all of these features are key components in determining agreement with phrase and clause constituents.

For example, gender, humanness, and number are essential factors in feature compatibility, or agreement, between the verb and its subject; whereas gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case are all factors in feature compatibility between nouns and their modifiers.

Arabic nouns have a **base form**, or stem, which is used in a word list or looked up in a dictionary. This is also called the “**citation form**.” It is the bare-bones singular noun. Sometimes it is listed without any case ending, but often, in word lists, the nouns will be in the nominative case if read out loud. For example:

ambassador	<i>safiir-un</i>	سفير	poetry	<i>shi‘r-un</i>	شعر
map	<i>xariiTat-un</i>	خريطة	glory	<i>majd-un</i>	مجد
entrance	<i>madkhal-un</i>	مدخل	silver	<i>fiDDat-un</i>	فضة

1 Gender

Arabic nouns are classified as either feminine or masculine.¹ The gender category into which a noun falls is semantically arbitrary, except where a noun refers to a human being or other creature, when it normally conforms with natural gender. From the point of view of word structure, or morphology, the masculine form is the simplest and most basic shape, whereas feminine nouns usually have a suffix that marks their gender. For the most part, gender is overtly marked, but there are a few words whose gender is covert (see cryptomasculine and cryptofeminine nouns) and shows up only in agreement sequences.

¹ A very few nouns can be either masculine or feminine. See section 1.4 “dual gender nouns.”

1.1 Masculine nouns

This is the base category, consisting of a vast range of nouns including male human beings and other living creatures, abstract and concrete nouns, and proper names. As a very general rule, if an Arabic noun does not have a feminine suffix, it is masculine.

river	<i>nahr</i>	نهر	minister	<i>waziir</i>	وزير
council	<i>majlis</i>	مجلس	progress	<i>taqaddum</i>	تقدم
proof	<i>burhaan</i>	برهان	peace	<i>salaam</i>	سلام

1.1.1 Masculine proper names

1.1.1.1 PERSONAL NAMES: Arabic male given names are considered masculine, even though some of them end with *taa' marbuuTa* or *'alif*:

Makram	<i>makram</i>	مكرم	Osama	<i>'usaama</i>	أسامة
Amin	<i>'amiin</i>	أمين	Moses	<i>muusaa</i>	موسى
Fouad	<i>fu'aad</i>	فؤاد	Mustafa	<i>muSTafaa</i>	مصطفى

1.1.1.2 COUNTRIES: Country names are usually feminine, but there are a few masculine ones, including:

Morocco	<i>al-maghrib</i>	المغرب	Jordan	<i>al-'urdunn</i> ²	الأردن
Iraq	<i>al-'iraaq</i>	العراق	Sudan	<i>al-suudaan</i>	السودان
Lebanon	<i>lubnaan</i>	لبنان			

1.1.2 Cryptomasculine nouns

A few words look overtly feminine because they are spelled with *taa' marbuuTa*, but they are actually masculine. Some of these are plural or collective forms. Some examples include:

Singular:

great scholar	<i>'allaama</i> ³	علامة	Caliph	<i>khaliifa</i>	خليفة
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² Wehr (1979) identifies the country of Jordan (*al-'urdunn*) as either masculine or feminine. As the name of the River Jordan, it is strictly masculine.

³ This pattern, *fa'aaala* فعالة, is one that implies greatness or intensity. Another example is 'globe-trotter' *raHHaala* رحالة.

Plural:

Pharaohs (pl.)	<i>faraa'ina</i>	فراعنة	brothers	<i>'ixwa</i>	إخوة
doctors (m. pl.)	<i>dakaatira</i>	دكاترة	students	<i>Talaba</i>	طلبة
Shiites (coll.)	<i>shii'a</i>	شيعة	great men	<i>rijaalaat</i> ⁴	رجال

1.2 Feminine nouns

Most feminine nouns are marked by the *taa' marbuuTa* suffix (pronounced *-ah* or *-a* in pause form). Some of the most common categories for feminine nouns are: female human beings, female creatures, abstract concepts, individual units of naturally occurring classes (e.g., banana, tree), names of cities, names of most countries, and parts of the body that come in pairs (e.g., legs, hands, eyes).

1.2.1 Common nouns

picture	<i>Suura</i>	صورة	tribe	<i>qabiila</i>	قبيلة
storm	<i>'aaSifa</i>	عاصفة	meal	<i>wajba</i>	وجبة

1.2.2 Concepts

Arabism	<i>'uruuba</i>	عروبة	trust	<i>thiqa</i>	ثقة
culture	<i>thaqaafa</i>	ثقافة	civilization	<i>HaDaara</i>	حضارة

1.2.3 Abstract ideas

diversification	<i>ta'addudiyya</i>	تعددية	importance	<i>'ahammiyya</i>	أهمية
stardom	<i>nujuumiyya</i>	نجومية	freedom	<i>Hurriyya</i>	حرية

1.2.4 Instances (a single instance of an action)

a convulsion	<i>za'za'a</i>	زعة	a shipment	<i>shaHna</i>	شحنة
a coincidence	<i>Sudfa</i>	صدفة	a burst of laughter	<i>qahqaha</i>	قهقهة

1.2.5 Unit nouns (individual units of larger collective entities)

a tree	<i>shajara</i>	شجرة	a fish	<i>samaka</i>	سمكة
a grape	<i>'inaba</i>	عنب	a thorn	<i>shawka</i>	شوكة

⁴ This is a "plural of a plural." (See section 3.2.5 for details on this structure.)

1.2.6 Cities

Names of cities are considered feminine because the Arabic word for ‘city’ is *madiina*, a feminine word. This is true for all cities, not just Arab cities.

Tunis	<i>tuunis</i>	تونس	Beirut	<i>bayruut</i>	بيروت
Cairo	<i>al-qaahira</i>	القاهرة	Paris	<i>baariis</i>	باريس
Jerusalem	<i>al-quds</i>	القدس	London	<i>landan</i>	لندن

Certain cities have titles or epithets which reflect the feminine gender of the city name. For example:

Medina “the Enlightened”	<i>al-madiinat-u l-munawwarat-u</i>	المدينة المنورة
Mecca “the Venerable”	<i>makkat-u l-mukarramat-u</i>	مكة المكرمة
Tunis “the Verdant”	<i>tuunis-u l-xaDraa’-u</i>	تونس الخضراء

1.2.7 Countries

Most countries are considered feminine, especially if their names end in *-aa*. Exceptions are noted above in section 1.1.1.2. Some examples of feminine gender countries are:

Egypt	<i>miSr</i>	مصر	America	<i>’amriikaa</i>	أمريكا
Syria	<i>suuriyaa</i>	سوريا	China	<i>al-Siin</i>	الصين
France	<i>faransaa</i>	فرنسا	Spain	<i>’isbaanyaa</i>	إسبانيا

Examples of phrases:

Muslim Spain	<i>’isbaanyaa l-muslimat-u</i>	إسبانيا المسلمة
North America	<i>’amriikaa l-shimaaliyyat-u</i>	أمريكا الشمالية
ancient Egypt	<i>miSr-u l-qadiimat-u</i>	مصر القديمة

1.2.8 Female proper names

Names of women and girls are considered feminine since they refer to female human beings. They may or may not end with *taa’ marbuuTa*. Female names are diptote.

Zahra	<i>zahra</i>	زهرة	Zeinab	<i>zaynab</i>	زينب
Alia	<i>’aaliya</i>	عالية	Selma	<i>salmaa</i>	سلمى
Karima	<i>kariima</i>	كريمة	Hanan	<i>Hanaan</i>	حنان

1.2.9 Nouns spelled with final *taa'*

Two common words that are feminine by nature but spelled with a final *taa'* (rather than *taa'* *marbuuTa*):

daughter; girl	<i>bint</i>	بنت	sister	<i>'uxt</i>	أخت
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1.2.10 Parts of the body

Certain parts of the body are considered feminine although not marked with *taa'* *marbuuTa*, especially those parts that come in pairs. For example:

foot	<i>qadam</i>	قدم	hand	<i>yad</i>	يد
eye	<i>'ayn</i>	عين	ear	<i>'udhun</i>	أذن

1.2.11 Borrowed nouns

Nouns borrowed from other languages that end with an *-ah* or *-aa* sound are usually treated as feminine:

doctorate (Fr. 'doctorat')	<i>duktuuraah</i>	دكتوراه
cinema (Fr. 'cinéma')	<i>siinamaa</i>	سينما
music	<i>muusiiqaa</i>	موسيقى
opera	<i>'uubiraa</i>	أوبرا
delta (Greek 'delta')	<i>daltaa</i> ⁵	دلتا

1.2.12 Other feminine suffixes

Some nouns are marked feminine by suffixes other than *taa'* *marbuuTa*. These endings include: *'alif* plus *hamza* (*-aa'* اء) or *'alif Tawiila* (*-aa l*) or *'alif maqSuura* (*-aa* ى). These endings are suffixed **after** the root consonants.⁶ For example:

desert (root: <i>S-H-r</i>)	<i>SaHraa'</i>	صحراء
remembrance (root: <i>dh-k-r</i>)	<i>dhikraa</i>	ذكرى
universe; world (root: <i>d-n-y</i>)	<i>dunya</i>	دنيا

⁵ As in *daltaa l-niil-i* 'the Nile Delta.'

⁶ Note that there are also a number of masculine nouns that end with *'alif* plus *hamza*, *'alif Tawiila*, or *'alif maqSuura*. The *'alif* ending in those instances represents the final defective consonant of the lexical root and is **not** an affix. Some of these masculine nouns include:

song (root: <i>gh-n-y</i>)	<i>ghinaa'</i>	غناء
meaning (root: <i>'-n-y</i>)	<i>ma'nan</i>	معنى
stream (root: <i>j-r-y</i>)	<i>majran</i>	مجرى
formal legal opinion (root: <i>f-t-y</i>)	<i>fatwaa</i>	فتوى

beautiful woman; belle (root: H-s-n)	Hasnaa'	حسناء
candy (root: H-l-w)	Halwaa	حلوى
fever (root H-m-m)	Hummaa	حمى
chaos (root f-w-D)	fawDaa	فوضى

1.2.13 Cryptofeminine nouns

A few nouns are not overtly marked for feminine gender and yet are feminine. This is a small, defined set and includes:

bride	^ʿ aruus	عروس	self; soul	nafs	نفس
mother	^ʿ umm	أم	wine	xamr	خمر
fire	naar	نار	well	bi'r	بئر
house	daar	دار	cup	ka's	كأس
earth; ground; land	^ʿ arD	أرض	sun	shams	شمس
war	Harb	حرب	tooth; age	sinn	سن

Examples of cryptofeminine nouns and modifiers:

the afterlife	al-daar-u l- ^ʿ aaxirat-u	الدار الآخرة
the Holy Land	al- ^ʿ arD-u l-muqaddasat-u	الأرض المقدسة
common ground	^ʿ arD-un mushtarakat-un	أرض مشتركة
the First World War	al-Harb-u l- ^ʿ aalamiyyat-u l- ^ʿ uulaa	الحرب العالمية الأولى
in a deep well	fii bi'r-in ^ʿ amiiqat-in	في بئر عميقة

1.3 Natural gender nouns

Many nouns that refer to human beings or other living creatures have both a masculine and a feminine form. They vary in gender depending on the nature of the referent, just as English has pairs of words such as “host” and “hostess.” The general rule is that the masculine is the base form and the feminine is denoted by the addition of *taa'* *marbuuTa*. Examples of some of these include:

king/queen	malik/malika	ملك/ملكة
artist (m/f)	fannaan/fannaana	فنان/فنانة
ambassador/ambadress	safiir/safiira	سفير/سفيرة

manager (m/f)	<i>mudiir/mudiira</i>	مدير / مديرة
grandfather/grandmother	<i>jadd/jadda</i>	جد / جدة
cat (m/f)	<i>qiTT/qiTta</i>	قط / قطّة
leopard (m/f)	<i>namir/namira</i>	نمر / نمرة

1.4 Dual gender nouns

A very small number of Arabic nouns are either masculine or feminine.⁷ They can be treated syntactically as either one, although feminine agreement predominates in the data gathered for this study. There are not many nouns in this group, but some of them are fairly frequent:

market	<i>suuq</i>	سوق	spirit	<i>ruuH</i>	روح
road; path	<i>Tariiq</i>	طريق	sky	<i>samaa'</i>	سماء
bag	<i>kiis</i>	كيس	tongue	<i>lisaan</i>	لسان
salt	<i>milH</i>	ملح	condition	<i>Haal</i>	حال

Examples:

the black market	<i>al-suuq-u l-sawdaa'-u</i>	السوق السوداء
the Arab spirit	<i>al-ruuH-u l-'arabiyyat-u</i>	الروح العربية
in good condition	<i>fii Haal-in jayyidat-in</i>	في حال جيدة

2 Humanness

A unique and important morpho-semantic feature of Arabic nouns is humanness, that is, whether or not they refer to human beings. This is a crucial grammatical point for predicting certain kinds of plural formation and for purposes of agreement with other components of a phrase or clause. The grammatical criterion of humanness applies **only to nouns in the plural**.

2.1 Agreement

Agreement with nouns in the plural depends on whether the noun refers to human beings.

2.1.1 Nonhuman referent

If a plural noun refers to nonhuman entities, be they creatures or inanimate things, it takes **feminine singular** agreement. This is sometimes referred to as “deflected” agreement.⁸ This applies to agreement with verbs, adjectives, and also pronouns.

⁷ See Wright 1967, II:181–83 for a comprehensive list of dual gender nouns.

⁸ See Belnap and Shabaneh 1992 on this topic.

الذئاب الرمادية

al-dhi'aab-u l-ramaadiyyat-u

the gray wolves

مخلوقات مفيدة جدا

maxluuqaat-un mufiidat-un jidd-an

very beneficial creatures

أشهر قليلة

'ashhur-un qaliilat-un

a few months

حميره الهزيلة

Hamiir-u-hu l-haziilat-u

his scrawny donkeys

الفنون المعاصرة

al-funuun-u l-mu'aaSirat-u

contemporary arts

في الأعوام الأخيرة

fii l-'a'waam-i l-'axiirat-i

in the last years

2.1.2 Human referent

When the referent of the plural noun is human, then the agreement is straightforward, using masculine or feminine plural forms as appropriate:

السفراء العرب

al-sufaraa'-u l-'arab-u

the Arab ambassadors

قادة عسكريون

qaadat-un 'askariyy-uuna

military leaders

الإخوان المسلمون

al-' ixwaan-u l-muslim-uuna

the Muslim Brotherhood ('Brothers')

الخلفاء الراشدون

al-xulafaa'-u l-raashid-uuna

the orthodox caliphs

النساء المتقدمات في السن

al-nisaa'-u l-mutaqaddimaat-u fii l-sinn-i

women of advanced age

أحد السكان الأصليين

'aHad-u l-sukkaan-i l-'aSlIyy-iina

one of the indigenous residents

2.1.3 Special cases

2.1.3.1 GROUPS OF HUMANS AS ABSTRACTIONS: Sometimes, although the noun referents are human, they are being referred to as abstractions, and thus the plural is treated as a nonhuman plural:

السلطات الرومانية

al-suluTaata-u l-ruumaaniyyat-u

the Roman authorities

جميع أسرهم الكريمة

jamii'-u 'usar-i-him-i l-kariimat-i

all their distinguished families

من أهم الشخصيات النسائية في التاريخ

min 'ahamm-i l-shaxSiyyaat-i l-nisaa'iyyat-i fii l-taariix-i

among the most important female personalities in history

هناك فئات كثيرة من الشعب تعيش تحت الأرض

hunaaka fi'aat-un kathiirat-un min-a l-sha'b-i ta'iish-u taHt-a l-'arD-i.

There are many groups of people [who] live underground.

فإن الغالبية انخرطت في جدل عنيف
fa-ʔinna l-ghaalibiyat-a nxaraT-at fii jadal-in ʿaniif-in
 but the majority plunged into violent debate

قتلت خمسة أشخاص على الأقل.
*qutil-at xamsat-u ʔashxaaS-in ʿalaa l-ʔaqall-i.*⁹
 At least five persons were killed.

2.1.3.2 'PEOPLE' WORDS: *shaʿb* شعب AND *naas* ناس

- (1) *shaʿb* شعب: The word *shaʿb* 'people' although semantically plural, is usually treated as masculine singular, as a collective noun. Its plural, *shuʿuub*, 'peoples' is treated as a nonhuman plural with feminine singular agreement:

مثل أي شعب آخر
mithl-a ʔayy-i shaʿb-in ʔaaxar-a
 like any other people

الشعوب العربية والإسلامية
al-shuʿuub-u l-ʿarabiyyat-u wa-l-ʔislaamiyyat-u
 the Arab and Islamic peoples

مجرد شعوب وثنية
mujarrad-u shuʿuub-in wathaniyyat-in
 mere pagan peoples

باركها الشعب كله.
baarak-a-haa l-shaʿb-u kull-u-hu.
 All the people blessed it.

- (2) *naas* ناس: The word *naas* 'people' has inconsistent agreement patterns. From the trilateral root ʔ-n-s, and related to the words إنسان *ʔinsaan* 'human being,' and أنسة *ʔaanisa* 'young lady,' it refers to people or folk in general. Sometimes its agreement patterns follow the rules for words referring to human beings, i.e., the agreement is masculine plural; other times (even in the same text) it may be treated as an abstraction and the agreement is feminine singular:

(2.1) Plural agreement:

الطيالان ناس شرفاء.
al-Talyaan-u naas-un shurafaaʔ-u.
 The Italians are noble (pl.) people.

فالناس يتناولون أنواعاً مختلفة من الأغذية.
fa-l-naas-u ya-tanaawal-uuna ʔanwaaʿ-an muxtalifat-an min-a l-ʔaghdhiyat-i.
 People eat (pl.) different sorts of food.

⁹ The agreement here is not with the feminine form of the number, since it is actually masculine (agreeing via reverse gender with the singular of *ʔashxaaS*, *shaxS*).

(2.2) Feminine singular agreement:

وكثير من الناس لا تأكل أغذية إلا من مصادر نباتية.

wa-kathiir-un min-a l-naas-i laa ta-ʔkul-u ʔaghdhiyat-an ʔillaa min maSaadir-a nabaatiyyat-in.

Many people only eat (f. sg.) food from plant sources ('do not eat food except from plant sources').

2.2 Form of the noun plural

Certain plural patterns are used only with nouns that denote human beings.

2.2.1 The sound masculine plural

engineer/s	<i>muhandis/muhandis-uuna</i>	مهندس / مهندسون
cook/s	<i>Tabbaax/Tabbaax-uuna</i>	طباخ / طبّاخون
Omani/s	<i>ʕumaaniyy/ʕumaaniyy-uuna</i>	عماني / عمانيون
Lebanese	<i>lubnaaniyy/lubnaaniyy-uuna</i>	لبناني / لبنانيون

2.2.2 Broken plurals of certain patterns**a. fuʕalaaʔ**

president/s	<i>raʔ iis/ruʔasaaʔ</i>	رئيس / رؤساء
ambassador/s	<i>safiir/sufaraaʔ</i>	سفير / سفراء
prince/s	<i>ʔamiir/ ʔ umaraaʔ</i>	أمير / أمراء

b. ʔafʕilaaʔ

friend/s	<i>Sadiiq/ ʔaSdiqaaʔ</i>	صديق / أصدقاء
doctor/s	<i>Tabiib/ ʔaTibbaaʔ</i>	طبيب / أطباء

c. fuʕʕaal

writer/s	<i>kaatib/kuttaab</i>	كاتب / كتّاب
student/s	<i>Taalib/Tullaab</i>	طالب / طلاب
guard/s	<i>Haaris/Hurraas</i>	حارس / حراس

2.2.3 Human/nonhuman homonyms

Sometimes two nouns may look identical (i.e., they are homonyms) but have different meanings, one human and one nonhuman, and so the plural is different,

according to the noun referent:

worker/s	‘aamil/‘ummaal	عامل / عمال
factor/s	‘aamil/ ‘awaamil	عامل / عوامل

3 Number

Arabic nouns are marked for three different kinds of number: **singular, dual, and plural**. Because Arabic has a special morphological category for the dual, plural in Arabic refers to three or more. The singular is considered the base form of the noun, and the dual and plural are extensions of that form in various ways.

3.1 The dual (*al-muthannaa* المثنى)

Arabic has a separate number category for two of anything. Instead of using the number “two” (*ithnaani* إثنان or *ithnataani* اثنتان) plus the plural noun, as does English (“two hands”), Arabic uses a dual suffix on the singular stem to mark the noun as being dual (e.g., *yad-aani* ‘two hands’). The suffix has two case forms, the case being signaled by the change of the long vowel in the suffix from /-aa-/ to /-ay-/:

-aani	(nominative)
-ayni	(genitive/accusative)

Nominative:

وصل سفيران.

waSal-a safiir-aani.

Two ambassadors arrived.

Genitive:

بين سفيرين

bayn-a safiir-ayni

between two ambassadors

Accusative:

زاروا السفيرين.

zaar-uu l-safiir-ayni.

They visited the two ambassadors.

3.1.1 Dual with *taa’ marbuuTa*

When the dual suffix is added to a noun ending in *taa’ marbuuTa*, the *taa’ marbu-uTa* is no longer the final letter in the word and it turns into regular *taa’*.

a year	<i>sanat-un</i>	سنة
two years	<i>sanat-aani</i>	سنتان
in (after) two years	<i>ba‘d-a sanat-ayni</i>	بعد سنتين
a city	<i>madiinat-un</i>	مدينة
two cities	<i>madiinat-aani</i>	مدینتان
in two cities	<i>fii madiinat-ayni</i>	في مدينتين

3.1.2 Dual plus *waaw* or *yaa*⁹

When the dual suffix is added to certain words that are biliteral in origin, or to words in the defective declension, a *waaw* or *yaa*⁹ is inserted before the dual suffix:¹⁰

أَبَوَان	أَخَوَان	مَحَامِيَان
<i>‘ab-a-w-aani</i>	<i>‘ax-a-w-aani</i>	<i>muHaamiy-aani</i>
parents	two brothers	two lawyers
قَاضِيَان	مَقْهِيَان	مُسْتَشْفِيَان
<i>qaaDiy-aani</i>	<i>maqhay-aani</i>	<i>mustashfay-aani</i>
two judges	two cafés	two hospitals

3.1.3 Definiteness in the dual

One of the features of the dual suffix is that it shows no distinction between definite and indefinite. It cannot be marked for nunation.¹¹

two smugglers	<i>muharrib-aani</i>	مُهْرِبَان
the two smugglers	<i>al-muharrib-aani</i>	المُهْرِبَان
with two smugglers	<i>ma‘-a muharrib-ayni</i>	مع مُهْرِبَيْن
with the two smugglers	<i>ma‘-a l-muharrib-ayni</i>	مع المُهْرِبَيْن

3.1.4 *Nuun*-deletion in *‘iDaafa*

If a dual noun is the first term of an *‘iDaafa* or annexation structure, the *nuun* plus *kasra* (*/-ni/* نِ) of the dual suffix is deleted. Thus, *-aani* becomes *-aa* and *-ayni* becomes *-ay*.¹²

¹⁰ Whether the additional consonant is *waaw* or *yaa*⁹ depends on the root consonants and on derivational morphology. See Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2: 14–17.

¹¹ The dual suffixes *-aani* and *-ayni* as well as the sound masculine plural suffixes *-uuna* and *-iina* both terminate with the consonant *nuun*, followed by a short vowel, and this feature behaves to a certain extent as a form of nunation (being deleted if the noun has a possessive pronoun suffix, for instance). Additional nunation is not used for these suffixes.

¹² In Arabic annexation structures, there is a general prohibition on the first term (the *muDaaf*), against noun suffixes ending with an *-n* sound. This applies to nunation (indefiniteness marking), to the dual suffix, and to the sound masculine plural.

وزيرا العدل والإعلام

waziir-aa l-^cadl-i wa l-^oi^claam-i

the two ministers of Justice and Information

في سياستي الدفاع والتجارة

fii siyaasat-ay-i l-difaa^c-i wa l-tijaarat-i¹³

in the two policies of defense and trade

لوزيري الخارجية

li-waziir-ay-i l-xaarijiyyat-i

for the two foreign ministers

في يومي السبت والأحد

fii yawm-ay-i l-sabt-i wa l-^oaHad-i

on the two days of Saturday
and Sunday

شقة مكونة من غرفتي نوم

shaqqat-un mukawwanat-un min ghurfat-ay nawm-in

a two-bedroom apartment ('an apartment consisting of two bedrooms')

3.1.5 Nuun-deletion with pronoun suffix

The same process occurs when a noun in the dual gets a possessive pronoun suffix. The *-ni* of the dual suffix is deleted and the possessive pronoun suffix is attached directly to the *-aa* or *-ay* of the dual suffix. For example:

بين يديه

bayn-a yad-ay-hi

in front of him ('between his two hands')

من جانبيه

min jaanib-ay-hi

from its two sides

تفتح ذراعيها.

ta-ftaH-u dhiraac-ay-haa.

She opens her arms.

وصل مندوباه.

waSal-a manduub-aa-hu.

His two delegates arrived.

3.1.6 Dual agreement

When a noun in the dual is modified by an adjective, is referred to by a pronoun, or is the subject of a following verb, then these form classes conform to the dual inflection as well. Thus, the concept of dual is present not only in nouns, but in adjectives, pronouns and verbs. These are discussed separately under each of the form-class headings, but here are some examples:

هناك موضوعان مهمان.

hunaaka mawDuu^c-aani muhimm-aani.

There are two important subjects.

خلال السنتين الماضيتين

xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maaDiyat-ayni

during the past two years

خادم الحرمين الشريفين

xaadim-u l-Haram-ayni l-shariif-ayni¹⁴

the Servant of the two Holy Places

بين هاذين الحدثين

bayn-a haadh-ayni l-Hadath-ayni

between these two events

¹³ In this and the following phrases the *-ay* dual ending is given a "helping vowel" *kasra* because of the consonantal nature of the *-y* ending on the dual suffix *-ay*, in order to help pronunciation and liaison with the following word. (See Wright 1967, I:21 on this point.)

¹⁴ A traditional title of the ruler of Saudi Arabia.

3.2 The Plural (*al-jam'* الجمع)

Arabic nouns form their plurals in three ways. Two of these are “external” plurals consisting of suffixes added to the singular stem (the sound feminine and sound masculine plurals). The third way of pluralizing occurs inside the noun stem itself (the “broken” or internal plural), shifting the arrangement of vowels, and sometimes inserting an extra consonant or two. To add to this diversity, a noun may have two or three (or more) alternative plurals.

3.2.1 The sound feminine plural (*jam' mu'annath saalim* جمع مؤنث سالم)

This form of plural is very common and applies to an extensive range of Arabic noun classes, both human and nonhuman. It consists of a suffix *-aat* (ات) attached to the singular stem of the noun. Note that when this suffix is attached to a noun that has *taa' marbuuTa* in the singular, it **replaces** the *taa' marbuuTa*:

power/s	<i>quwwa/</i> <i>quww-aat</i>	قوة/قوات	station/s	<i>maHaTTa/</i> <i>maHaTT-aat</i>	محطة/محطات
oasis/-es	<i>waaHa/</i> <i>waaH-aat</i>	واحة/واحات	society/ies	<i>mujtama'/</i> <i>mujtama'-aat</i>	مجتمع/مجتمعات
company/ies	<i>sharika/</i> <i>sharik-aat</i>	شركة/شركات	airport/s	<i>maTaar/</i> <i>maTaar-aat</i>	مطار/مطارات

3.2.1.1 INFLECTION OF THE SOUND FEMININE PLURAL: The sound feminine plural suffix has a special declension of its own. It inflects for definiteness (definite and indefinite) and for case, but only shows two case variations instead of the normal three: *-u* or *-un* for nominative and *-i* or *-in* for genitive/accusative. **The sound feminine plural ending never takes *fatHa* *-a*.** For inflectional paradigms see section 5.4.2.1, subsection (3), in this chapter.

Nominative:

companies	<i>sharik-aat-un</i>	شركاتٌ
the companies	<i>al-sharik-aat-u</i>	الشركاتُ

Genitive:

in companies	<i>fii sharik-aat-in</i>	في شركاتٍ
in the companies	<i>fii l-sharik-aat-i</i>	في الشركاتِ

Accusative:

He founded companies.	<i>'assas-a sharik-aat-in.</i>	أسس شركاتٌ.
He founded the companies.	<i>'assas-a l-sharik-aat-i.</i>	أسس الشركاتِ.

Examples:

يسري اتصالات.	لسنا مصريات.
yu-jrii ttiSaal-aat-in.	las-na miSriyy-aat-in.
He is implementing contacts .	We (f.) are not Egyptian .

3.2.1.2 VARIANTS: BUFFER SOUNDS INSERTED BEFORE SOUND FEMININE PLURAL SUFFIX: Some nouns insert a *waaw* or *yaa'* or a *haa'* to the noun stem before affixing the *-aat* ending. Most of these nouns end in the singular with a vowel or *'alif-hamza*, but some end with *taa'* or *taa' marbuuTa*:

(1) **waaw insertion:**

(1.1) Two common bi-consonantal nouns insert *waaw* before the *-aat* ending:

sister/s *'uxt/ 'axa-w-aat* أخوات/أخت year/s *sana/sana-w-aat* سنة/سنوات

(1.2) Certain borrowed words ending in *'alif Tawiila* take the sound feminine plural with *waaw* as buffer between the two *'alifs*. Note that even though the referents of these nouns are human males, the plural is sound feminine.

pasha/s *baashaa/baashaa-w-aat* باشا/باشاوات

pope/s *baabaa/baabaa-w-aat~baaba-w-aat* بابا/باباوات ~ بابوات

(1.3) Nouns ending in the suffix *-aa'* often drop the final *hamza* and add a *waaw* between the stem and suffix:¹⁵

green (f.)/greens *xaDraa' /xaDraa-w-aat* خضراء/خضراوات
(vegetables)

desert/s¹⁶ *SaHraa' /SaHraa-w-aat* صحراء/صحراوات

parrot/s *babbaghaa' /babbaghaa-w-aat* ببغاء/ببغاوات

(1.4) Nouns ending in *'alif* plus *taa' marbuuTa* usually shorten *'alif* to *fatHa*, and add a *waaw*:

channel/s; canal/s *qanaat/qana-w-aat* قناة/قنوات

prayer/s *Salaat/ Sala-w-aat* صلاة/صلوات

(2) **yaa' insertion:** Nouns that end with *'alif maqSuura* shorten the *'alif* to *fatHa* and insert *yaa'* before the sound feminine plural suffix:

memory/ies *dhikraa/dhikra-y-aat* ذكرى/ذكريات

sweet/s *Halwaa/Halwa-y-aat* حلوى/حلويات

¹⁵ Note that if the *hamza* in the *-aa'* ending is part of the root, then the *hamza* is not deletable, as in: *'ijraa'aat* إجراءات.

¹⁶ Alternative plurals for *SaHraa'* are *SaHaaraa* صحارى and *SaHaar-in* صهار.

fever/s	Hummaa/Humma-y-aat	حمى / حميات
level/s	mustawan/mustawa-y-aat	مستوى / مستويات
hospital/s	mustashfan/mustashfa-y-aat	مستشفى / مستشفيات

- (3) **haa' insertion:** The word 'umm, 'mother' inserts a haa' preceded by fatHa before suffixing the sound feminine plural:¹⁷

mother/s	'umm/ 'umm-ah-aat	أم / أمهات
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Borrowed words ending with a long vowel (especially -uu) often insert haa' as a buffer before the /-aat/ suffix in order to avoid two long vowels coming together:

casino/s	kaaziinuu/kaaziinuu-h-aat	كازينو / كازينوهات
radio/s	raadyuu/raadyuu-h-aat	راديو / راديوهات
studio/s	(i)stuudyuu/(i)stuudyuu-h-aat	(إ) ستوديو / (إ) ستوديوهات

3.2.1.3 WHERE THE SOUND FEMININE PLURAL IS USED: The following categories describe the types of nouns which make their plural using the sound feminine plural suffix -aat. Some categories are general, like number 1, and some are specific, like 3 and 4. In some cases there is more than one form of the plural. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but covers major categories.

- (1) **Many (but not all) nouns ending in taa' marbuuTa:**

embassy/ies	sifaara/sifaar-aat	سفارة / سفارات
government/s	Hukuuma/Hukuum-aat	حكومة / حكومات
language/s	lugha/lugh-aat	لغة / لغات
ticket/s	biTaaqa/biTaaq-aat~baTaa' iq	بطاقة / بطاقات ~ بطائق
pharmacy/ies	Saydaliyya/Saydaliyy-aat	صيدلية / صيدليات
continent/s	qaarra/qaarr-aat	قارة / قارات
barracks	thukna/thukn-aat~thukan	ثكنة / ثكنات ~ ثكن

- (1.1) **Vowel variation:** Feminine nouns ending with taa' marbuuTa or taa' that have sukuun on the second radical, often use the sound feminine plural with a slight internal vowel change, usually a shift to an additional vowel inserted after the second radical. When the original short vowel is fatHa or

¹⁷ The word 'umm, in addition to meaning literally 'mother,' also has abstract meanings such as 'source, origin, original version, essence.' See Wehr 1979 for examples and details.

kasra, the change tends to be to *fatHas*; if the short vowel is *Damma*, then the *Damma* may be copied or there may be a change to *fatHas*.

service/s	<i>xidma/xidam-aat~xidam</i>	خدمة/خدمات ~ خدم
experience/s	<i>xibra/xibar-aat</i>	خبرة/خبرات
girl/s; daughter/s	<i>bint/ban-aat</i>	بنت/بنات
session/s	<i>jalsa/jalas-aat</i>	جلسة/جلسات
sister/s	<i>’uxt/’axaw-aat</i>	أخت/أخوات
circle/s; ring/s	<i>Halqa/Halaq-aat</i>	حلقة/حلقات
authority/ies	<i>sulTa/suluT-aat</i>	سلطة/سلطات

- (2) **Nouns referring strictly to female human beings.** Many of these nouns are actually participles used as substantives (nouns). Some denote professions, but others are simply common nouns. When the sound feminine plural is used to refer to groups of human beings, it only denotes **exclusively female groups**.¹⁸

lady/ies	<i>sayyida/sayyid-aat</i>	سيدة/سيدات
queen/s	<i>malika/malik-aat</i>	ملكة/ملكات
actress/es	<i>mumaththila/mumaththil-aat</i>	ممثلة/ممثلات
professor/s (f.)	<i>’ustaadha/’ustaadh-aat</i>	أستاذة/أستاذات
customer/s (f.)	<i>zabuuna/zabuun-aat</i>	زبونة/زبونات
Muslim/s (f.)	<i>muslima/muslim-aat</i>	مسلمة/مسلمات
expert/s (f.)	<i>xabiira/xabiir-aat</i>	خبيرة/خبيرات

- (3) **Verbal nouns from derived forms II–X of trilateral roots and also from Forms I–IV of quadrilateral roots.** These verbal nouns all take the sound feminine plural, even though most of them are masculine in the singular. In the Form II verbal noun, the *-aat* plural often alternates with a broken plural.¹⁹

Verbal nouns from trilateral roots:

arrangement/s	II. <i>tartiib/tartiib-aat</i>	ترتيب/ترتيبات
negotiation/s	III. <i>mufaawaDa/mufaawaD-aat</i>	مفاوضة/مفاوضات

¹⁸ If even one human male is present within the group, the masculine plural form is used.

¹⁹ The optional Form II plural is usually of the *CaCaaCiiC* pattern. See section 3.2.3.2, subsection (4.1.4), in this chapter.

announcement/s	IV. ^ʔ i ^ʕ laan/ ^ʔ i ^ʕ laan-aat	إعلان/إعلانات
tension/s	V. tawattur/tawattur-aat	توتر/توترات
exchange/s	VI. tabaadul/tabaadul-aat	تبادل/تبادلات
reflection/s	VII. in ^ʕ ikaas/ in ^ʕ ikaas-aat	انعكاس/انعكاسات
discovery/ies	VIII. iktishaaf/iktishaaf-aat	اكتشاف/اكتشافات
investment/s	X. istithmaar/istithmaar-aat	استثمار/استثمارات

Verbal nouns from quadriliteral roots:

mumbling/s	I. hamhama/hamham-aat	همهمة/همهمات
decline/s	II. tadahwur/tadahwur-aat	تدهور/تدهورات
serenity/ies	IV. iTmi ^ʔ naan/iTmi ^ʔ naan-aat	اطمئنان/اطمئنانات

The *nisba* of derived form verbal nouns, when functioning as a noun referring to nonhuman entities, also takes the sound feminine plural, e.g., ‘reserve/s’ iHtiyaaTiyy احتياطي /iHtiyaaTiyy-aat احتياطيات.

- (4) Active (AP) and passive (PP) participles of Form I that do not denote human beings, even though they may be masculine in the singular. Note that some Form I participles have an alternate broken plural form.

Examples:

plan/s	I PP: mashruu ^ʕ / mashruu ^ʕ -aat~mashaarii ^ʕ	مشروع/ات~مشاريع
manuscript/s	I PP: maxTuut/maxTuut-aat ²⁰	مخطوط/مخطوطات
implication/s	I PP: madluul/madluul-aat	مدلول/مدلولات
topic/s	I PP: mawDuu ^ʕ / mawDuu ^ʕ -aat~mawaaDii ^ʕ	موضوع/ات~مواضيع
creature/s	I PP: maxluuq/maxluuq-aat	مخلوق/مخلوقات
revenue/s	I AP: ʕaaʔid/ ʕaaʔid-aat	عائد/عائدات
import/s	I AP: waarid/waarid-aat	وارد/واردات
duty/ies	I AP: waajib/waajib-aat	واجب/واجبات
being/s	I AP: kaaʔin/kaaʔin-aat	كائن/كائنات
menu/s; list/s	I AP: qaaʔima/qaaʔim-aat ~ qawaaʔim	قائمة/قائمات~قوائم

²⁰ The singular occurs both as maxTuut مخطوط and maxTuutTa مخطوطة.

- (5) **Active (AP) and passive (PP) participles of the derived verb forms (II-X) and quadrilaterals if they do not refer to human beings.** These nouns may be either masculine or feminine in the singular.

volume/s	II PP: <i>mujallad/mujallad-aat</i>	مجلّد / مجلّدات
foundation/s	II PP: <i>mu'assasa/mu'assas-aat</i>	مؤسّسة / مؤسّسات
drug/s	II AP: <i>muxaddir/muxaddir-aat</i>	مخدّر / مخدّرات
note/s	II AP: <i>mudhakkira/mudhakkir-aat</i>	مذكّرة / مذكّرات
establishment/s	IV PP: <i>munsha'a/munsha'-aat</i>	منشأة / منشآت
ocean/s	IV AP: <i>muHiiT/muHiiT-aat</i>	محيط / محيطات
change/s	V PP: <i>mutaghayyar/mutaghayyar-aat</i>	متغيّر / متغيّرات
synonym/s	VI AP: <i>mutaraadif/mutaraadif-aat</i>	مترادف / مترادفات
slope/s	VII PP <i>munHaDar/munHaDar-aat</i>	منحضر / منحضرات
conference/s	VIII PP: <i>mu'tamar/mu'tamar-aat</i>	مؤتمر / مؤتمرات
level/s	VIII PP: <i>mustawan/mustaway-aat</i>	مستوى / مستويات
settlement/s	X PP: <i>mustawTana/mustawTan-aat</i>	مستوطنة / مستوطنات
hospital/s	X PP: <i>mustashfan/mustashfay-aat</i>	مستشفى / مستشفيات
swamp/s	X PP: <i>mustanqa'/mustanqa'-aat</i>	مستنقع / مستنقعات
camp/s	Quad PP: <i>mu'askar/mu'askar-aat</i>	معسكر / معسكرات
explosive/s	Quad AP: <i>mufarqi' /mufarqi'-aat</i>	مفرّق / مفرّقات

Note that of course, participles of any verb form that refer (strictly) to female human beings will also take the sound feminine plural, in accordance with the rule in 3.2.1.3(2) above:

teacher/s (f.)	II AP: <i>mudarrisa/mudarris-aat</i>	مدرّسة / مدرّسات
citizen/s (f.)	III AP: <i>muwaaTina/muwaaTin-aat</i>	مواطنة / مواطنات
supervisor/s (f.)	IV AP: <i>mushrifa/mushrif-aat</i>	مشرفة / مشرفات
specialist/s (f.)	V AP: <i>mutaxaSSisa/mutaxaSSis-aat</i>	متخصّصة / متخصّصات
consumer/s (f.)	X AP: <i>mustahlika/mustahlik-aat</i>	مستهلكة / مستهلكات

- (6) With most (but not all) **loanwords borrowed directly from a foreign language into Arabic**.²¹

computer/s	kumbiyuutir/kumbiyutir-aat	كمبيوتر/كمبيوترات
telephone/s	talifuun/talifuun-aat	تلفون/تلفونات
taxi/s	taaksii/taaksiiy-aat	تاكسي/تاكسيات
dollar/s	duulaar/duulaar-aat	دولار/دولارات
hormone/s	hurmuun/hurmuun-aat	هرمون/هرمونات
virus/es	fiiruus/fiiruus-aat	فيروس/فيروسات
liter/s	liitir/liitir-aat	ليتر/ليترات
lord/s	luurd/luurd-aat ²²	لورد/لوردات

- (7) **The tens numbers (twenty through ninety), when referring to decades,** such as the “twenties” and “sixties.” Note that the /-aat/ plural suffix is attached to the **genitive/accusative form of the word stem** (/i-in/, not /-uun/).

sixty/sixties	sittiina/sittiin-aat	ستين/ستينات
seventy/seventies	sab ^c iina/sab ^c iin-aat	سبعين/سبعينات
ninety/nineties	tis ^c iina/tis ^c iin-aat	تسعين/تسعينات

- (8) **Feminine proper names** even if they do not end in *taa^o marbuuTa*:

Zeinab/s	zaynab/zaynab-aat	زينب/زينبات
Amira/s	^o amiira/ ^o amiir-aat	أميرة/أميرات

- (9) **Names of the letters of the alphabet:**

^o alif/s	^o alif/ ^o alif-aat	ألف/ألفات
raa ^o /s	raa ^o /raa ^o -aat	راء/راءات
waaw/s	waaw/waaw-aat	واو/واوات

²¹ Some examples of borrowed nouns with Arabic broken plurals are:

bank/s	bank/bunuuk	بنك/بنوك
ton/s	Tann/ ^o aTnaan	طن/أطنان
million/s	milyuun/malaayiin	مليون/ملايين
mile/s	miil/ ^o amyaal	ميل/أميال
meter/s	mitr/ ^o aamtaar	متر/أمتار

²² As in *majlis-u l-luurdaat-i* ‘The House of Lords.’

- (10) **Names of the months:** There are three sets of names of the months used in Arabic: two sets for the solar calendar (one based on Semitic names and one on borrowed European names) and one for the lunar Muslim calendar.²³ All months make their plural with *-aat*.

April/s	<i>niisaan/niisaan-aat</i>	نيسان / نيسانات
July/s	<i>tammuz/tammuz-aat</i>	تموز / تموزات
Ramadan/s	<i>ramaDaan/ramaDaan-aat</i>	رمضان / رمضانات
Shawwal/s	<i>shawwaal/shawwaal-aat</i>	شَوَّال / شَوَّالات
December/s	<i>disambir/disambir-aat</i>	دسمبر / دسمبرات

- (11) **Feminine adjectives that stand on their own as substantives:** for example, the feminine relative or *nisba* adjectives (adjectives ending in *-iyya*). Adjectives take the sound feminine plural when referring strictly to female human beings.

Yemeni/s (f.)	<i>yamaniyya/yamaniyy-aat</i>	يمنية / يمنيات
Tunisian/s (f.)	<i>tuunisiyya/tuunisiyy-aat</i>	تونسية / تونسيات
Arab/s (f.)	<i>‘arabiyya/‘arabiyy-aat</i>	عربية / عربيات

- (12) **Other:** The sound feminine plural is used on a number of other nouns that do not clearly fall into the above categories. One especially frequent use is with nouns whose final syllable contains a long *-aa-* in the singular.

airport/s	<i>maTaar/maTaar-aat</i>	مطار / مطارات
orbit/s	<i>madaar/madaar-aat</i>	مدار / مدارات
field/s	<i>majaal/majaal-aat</i>	مجال / مجالات
animal/s	<i>Hayawaan/Hayawaan-aat</i>	حيوان / حيوانات
activity/ies	<i>nashaaT/nashaaT-aat</i> ²⁴	نشاط / نشاطات
decision/s	<i>qaraar/qaraar-aat</i>	قرار / قرارات
spice/s	<i>bahaar/bahaar-aat</i>	بهار / بهارات
security, guarantee/s	<i>Damaan/Damaan-aat</i>	ضمان / ضمانات
bath/s	<i>Hammaam/Hammaam-aat</i>	حمام / حمامات
current/s	<i>tayyaar/tayyaar-aat</i>	تيار / تيارات

²³ For complete sets of the Arabic names of months in the lunar and solar calendars see Ryding 1990, 409.

²⁴ Also *‘anshiTa* أنشطة.

waterfall/s	shallaal/shallaal-aat	شلال / شلالات
call/s	nidaa' /nidaa'-aat	نداء / نداءات
folder/s	milaff/milaff-aat	ملف / ملفات
location/s	maHall/maHall-aat	محل / محلات

3.2.2 The sound masculine plural (*jam' mudhakkar saalim* جمع مذكر سالم)

The sound masculine plural is much more restricted in occurrence than the sound feminine plural because, almost without exception, it **only occurs on nouns and adjectives referring to male human beings or mixed groups of male and female human beings**.²⁵

3.2.2.1 INFLECTION OF THE SOUND MASCULINE PLURAL: This type of plural takes the form of a suffix that attaches to the singular noun (or adjective): *-uuna* (nominative) or *-iina* (genitive/accusative).

- (1) **Case:** The sound masculine plural shows overtly only two case inflections instead of three. Note that the long vowel in the suffix (*-uu-* or *-ii-*) is the case marker, and is what changes when the case changes.²⁶ The short vowel ending (*fatHa*) (*-a*) remains the same in both the nominative and the genitive/accusative. This *fatHa* is not a case ending, but rather part of the spelling of the suffix. In pause form it is not pronounced. Examples:

observers (nom.)	muraaqib-uuna	مراقبون
observers (gen./acc.)	muraaqib-iina	مراقبين
surgeons (nom.)	jarraaH-uuna	جراحون
surgeons (gen./acc.)	jarraaH-iina	جراحين

- (2) **Definiteness:** One of the features of the sound masculine plural suffix is that, like the dual suffix, there is no distinction between definite and indefinite:

assistants	musaa'id-uuna	مساعدون
the assistants	al-musaa'id-uuna	المساعدون
with assistants	ma'a musaa'id-iina	مع مساعدين
with the assistants	ma'a l-musaa'id-iina	مع المساعدين

²⁵ Exceptions are very few and include, for example, ²arD/ أرض *araDuun* أرضون 'land/s.' The noun ²arD has a more common plural, however: ²araaD-in أراضي.

²⁶ Arab grammarians consider the long vowel of the sound masculine plural as the inflectional vowel, the one that indicates case.

3.2.2.2 Nuun-DELETION:

- (1) **As first term of ^oiDaafa:** A distinctive feature of the sound masculine plural suffix, like the dual suffix, is that because its final consonant is a *nuun*, the *nuun* and its vowel, *fatHa*, are deleted if the noun is the first term of an ^oiDaafa (annexation structure).²⁷ The long vowel of the suffix (-*uu*- or -*ii*-) is then left as the final element of the word.

فلسطينيو الخارج
filisTiiniyy-uu l-xaarij-i
 Palestinians abroad

من متخرجي الجامعة
min mutaxarrij-ii l-jaami^eat-i
 from the university graduates

مواطنو أوروبا الغربية
muwaaTin-uu ^ouurubbaa l-gharbiyyat-i
 the citizens of Western Europe

بمسلمي شمال إفريقيا
bi-muslim-ii shimaal-i ^o ifriiqiyaa
 with the Muslims of North Africa

لمديري المنظمات
li-mudiir-ii l-munaZZamaat-i
 for the administrators
 of the organizations

محبو العلم
muHibb-uu l-^eilm-i
 lovers of knowledge

متابعو اللعبة
mutaabi^e-uu l-la^ebat-i
 followers of the game

بنو قريش
ban-uu quraysh-in
 Quraysh tribe (literally:
 ‘the sons of Quraysh’)

- (2) **With a pronoun suffix:** Likewise, when a noun with the sound masculine plural is suffixed with a possessive pronoun, the *nuun* and short vowel /-a/ of the suffix are deleted:

from its supporters	<i>min mu^oayyid-ii-hi</i>	من مؤيديه
for their nominees	<i>li-murashshaH-ii-him</i>	لمرشحيهم
our delegates	<i>manduub-uu-naa</i>	مندوبونا
its publishers	<i>naashir-uu-haa</i>	ناشروها
our sons	<i>ban-uu-naa</i>	بنونا

3.2.2.3 WHERE THE SOUND MASCULINE PLURAL IS USED: The following categories show the types of nouns which form their plural using the sound masculine suffix. Some categories are general, like number 1, and some are specific, like 3 and 4. This is not an exhaustive list, but covers major categories.

²⁷ See note 12 in this chapter.

- (1) **Participles as nouns:** Participles acting as substantives (nouns) often take the sound masculine plural when referring to human males or mixed groups of male and female.
- (1.1) **Form I:** Some Form I participle nouns take the sound masculine plural, but most take a broken plural (see section 3.2.3.1, subsection (1.2)) when referring to male human beings or mixed male/female groups. Some examples of the sound masculine plural are:
- (1.2) **Forms II–X:** Derived form (II–X) triliteral and quadriliteral active and passive participles that refer to human males take the sound masculine plural:

Form II:

nominee/s	II PP: <i>murashshaH/murashshaH-uuna</i>	مرشح / مرشعون
actor/s	II AP: <i>mumaththil/mumaththil-uuna</i>	ممثل / ممثلون

Form III:

reporter/s	III AP: <i>muraasil/muraasil-uuna</i>	مراسل / مراسلون
citizen/s	III AP: <i>muwaaTin/muwaaTin-uuna</i>	مواطن / مواطنون
observer/s	III AP: <i>muraaqib/muraaqib-uuna</i>	مراقب / مراقبون

Form IV:

Muslim/s	IV AP: <i>muslim/muslim-uuna</i>	مسلم / مسلمون
attaché/s	IV PP: <i>mulHaq/mulHaq-uuna</i>	ملحق / ملحقون
manager/s	IV AP: <i>mudiir/mudiir-uuna</i>	مدير / مديرون
guide/s	IV AP: <i>murshid/murshid-uuna</i>	مرشد / مرشدون

Form V:

narrator/s	V AP: <i>mutakallim/mutakallim-uuna</i>	متكلم / متكلمون
extremist/s	V AP: <i>mutaTarrif/mutaTarrif-uuna</i>	متطرف / متطرفون
volunteer/s	V AP: <i>mutaTawwi^c/mutaTawwi^c-uuna</i>	متطوع / متطوعون
rebel/s	V AP: <i>mutamarriid/mutamarrid-uuna</i>	متمرد / متمردون

Form VI:

optimist/s	VI AP: <i>mutafaaⁱil/mutafaaⁱil-uuna</i>	متفائل / متفائلون
pessimist/s	VI AP: <i>mutashaaⁱm/mutashaaⁱm-uuna</i>	متشائم / متشائمون

Form VII: rare**Form VIII:**

voter/s; elector/s	VIII AP: <i>muntaxib/muntaxib-uuna</i>	منتخب/منتخبون
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listener/s	VIII AP: <i>mustami^c /mustami^c-uuna</i>	مستمع/مستمعون
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Form IX: rare**Form X:**

consumer/s	X AP: <i>mustahlik/mustahlik-uuna</i>	مستهلك/مستهلكون
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renter/s	X AP: <i>musta^jjir/musta^jjir-uuna</i>	مستأجر/مستأجرون
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(1.3) Quadriliterals:

engineer/s	QIAP: <i>muhandis/muhandis-uuna</i>	مهندس/مهندسون
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translator/s	QIAP: <i>mutarjim/mutarjim-uuna</i>	مترجم/مترجمون
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- (2) **Names of professions:** Certain nouns in Arabic refer to those who engage in professions or other pursuits. The pattern is CaCCaaC (*fa^caal* فَعَال). The masculine form of these nouns takes the sound masculine plural:

baker/s	<i>xabbaaz/xabbaaz-uuna</i>	خبّاز/خبّازون
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hunter/s	<i>Sayyaad/Sayyaad-uuna</i>	صيّاد/صيّادون
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money-changer/s	<i>Sarraaf/Sarraaf-uuna</i>	صرّاف/صرّافون
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coppersmith/s	<i>naHHaas/naHHaas-uuna</i>	نحاس/نحاسون
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- (3) **Alternation with broken plural:** Sometimes the sound masculine plural alternates with a broken plural:

son/s	<i>ibn/ 'abnaa^o ~ban-uuna</i>	ابن/أبناء ~ بنون
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director/s	<i>mudiir/ mudaraa^o ~ mudiir-uuna</i>	مدير/مدراء ~ مديرون
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- (4) **Noun *nisbas*:** *Nisba* or relative adjectives may also function as nouns, in which case, if they refer to human males or mixed groups, they are often pluralized with the sound masculine plural:²⁸

Lebanese	<i>lubnaaniyy/lubnaaniyy-uuna</i>	لبناني/لبنانيون
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European/s	<i>'uurubbiyy/'uurubbiyy-uunaa</i>	أوربي/أوربيون
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²⁸ Some exceptions to this include the words for 'Arab,' 'bedouin,' and 'foreigner' which take broken plurals: 'arabiyy/ 'arab عربي/عرب, badawiy/badw بدوي/بدو, and 'ajnabiyy/ 'ajaanib أجنبى/أجانب.

electrician/s	kahrabaa'iiyy/ kahrabaa'iiyy-uuna	كهربائيّ / كهربائيّون
statistician/s	'iHSaa'iiyy/'iHSaa'iiyy-uuna	إحصائيّ / إحصائيّون
politician/s	siyaasiyy/siyaasiyy-uuna	سياسيّ / سياسيّون
country dweller/s	riifiyy/riifiyy-uuna	ريفّيّ / ريفيّون

- (5) **Numbers in tens:** The tens numbers include the sound masculine plural suffix as part of their word structure. It inflects just as the regular sound masculine plural, -uuna for nominative and -iina for genitive/accusative.

twenty	'ishruuna	عشرون	sixty	sittuuna	ستون
thirty	thalaathuuna	ثلاثون	seventy	sab'uuna	سبعون
forty	'arba'uuna	أربعون	eighty	thamaanuuna	ثمانون
fifty	xamsuuna	خمسون	ninety	tis'uuna	تسعون

علي بابا والأربعون لصاً
'aliyy baabaa wa-l-'arba'-uuna liSS-an
Ali Baba and the **forty** thieves

في عشرين مجلداً
fii 'ishr-iina mujallad-an
in **twenty** volumes

بمشاركة ثلاثين باحثاً
bi-mushaarakat-i thalaath-iina baaHith-an
with the participation of **thirty** researchers

If a plural is needed for these terms ("forties," "fifties," the sound feminine plural is suffixed to the genitive/accusative form of the number (see above 3.2.1.3(7)). For more on numerals, see Chapter 15.

3.2.3 The broken plural (*jam' al-taksiir* جمع التكسير)

The broken or internal plural is highly characteristic of Arabic nouns and adjectives. It involves a shift of vowel patterns within the word stem itself, as in English "man/men," "foot/feet" or "mouse/mice." It may also involve the affixation of an extra consonant (usually *hamza* or *waaw*). The relationship between singular nouns and their broken plural forms relates to syllable and stress patterns, so that there is often a characteristic rhythm to the singular/plural doublet when said aloud.

The structure and regularities of the Arabic broken plural system have been the subject of research in morphological theory over the past fifteen years, and considerable progress has been made in developing theories to identify and account for the underlying regularities in the broken plural system, the most

prominent of those theories being templatic morphology and prosodic morphology.²⁹

For nonnative speakers of Arabic, learning which nouns take which plurals can take some time, but if singulars and plurals are learned as doublets and grouped together, sound patterns of vowel–consonant distribution become evident and, at least to some extent, ascertainable. The most common broken plural patterns are listed here under triptote (fully inflected) and diptote (partially inflected) categories. (For the nature of diptote inflection see section 5.4.2.2 in this chapter.) Wherever possible, specific vowel patterns are identified.

Where patterns are more general, consonant–vowel structures are also given, using the convention that the symbol V stands for any vowel and VV for any long vowel. The letter C stands for any consonant.³⁰

3.2.3.1 TRIPTOTE PATTERN PLURALS (*jam' mu'rab* جمع معرب): These broken plural patterns are fully inflectable. They show all three case markers and can take nunation when indefinite.

(1) Broken plural patterns with internal vowel change only:

- (1.1) Plural:** CuCuuC (*fu'uul* فَعُول) **from singular:** CaCC (*fa'ī* فَعْل) or CaCiC (*fa'īl* فَعْل)

The CuCuuC plural pattern is a frequent one, especially for plurals of geminate root Form I verbal nouns:

right/s	<i>Haqq/Huquuq</i>	حقّ / حقوق
doubt/s	<i>shakk/shukuuk</i>	شكّ / شكوك
art/s	<i>fann/funuun</i>	فنّ / فنون
army/ies	<i>jaysh/juyuush</i>	جيش / جيوش
century/ies	<i>qarn/quruun</i>	قرن / قرون
king/s	<i>malik/muluuk</i>	ملك / ملوك

²⁹ See, for example, McCarthy and Prince 1990a and 1990b, Paoli 1999, and Ratcliffe 1990. In particular, see Ratcliffe 1998 for an extensive analysis of Arabic broken plurals within comparative Semitic. As he describes it, it is “a historical and comparative study of a portion of the nominal morphology of Arabic and other Semitic languages on the basis of a fresh theoretical approach to non-concatenative or ‘root and pattern’ morphology” (1998, 1). As to the abundance of broken plural forms, Lecomte notes (1968, 72–73): “Le problème des pluriels internes est fort complexe, et rebelle à toute explication décisive. On notera toutefois que la fixation a été opérée par les lexicographes anciens aux IIe et IIIe siècles de l'Hégire à la suite de minutieuses enquêtes dans les tribus. Les différences dialectales constituent donc une des clés du problème. Elles expliquent en tout cas pourquoi les dictionnaires peuvent signaler plusieurs pluriels pour un même mot.”

³⁰ For an extensive list and discussion of broken plural patterns, see Wright 1967, I:199–234. For further lists and analysis of broken plurals, see also Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2: 267–76; Blachère and Gaudefroy Demombynes 1975, 166–99; Cowan 1964, 23–28 and 200–202; Fleisch 1961, 470–505; MECAS 1965, 245–46; and Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 102.

A borrowed word that has taken this plural pattern:

bank/s	<i>bank/bunuuk</i>	بنك/بنوك
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- (1.2) Plural CuCCaaC (*fu^{aa}aal* فُعَال) from singular: CaaCiC (*faa^{il}il* فاعِل): This plural, used with the Form I active participle (m.), is used only for human beings.³¹

deputy/ies	<i>naa' ib/ nuwwaab</i>	نائب/نواب
worker/s	<i>'aamil/ 'ummaal</i>	عامل/عمال
reader/s	<i>qaari' / qurraa'</i>	قارئ/قراء
guard/s	<i>Haaris/Hurraas~Harasa</i>	حارس/حراس~حرسة
rider/s	<i>raakib/rukkaab</i>	راكب/ركاب
student/s	<i>Taalib/Tullaab~Talaba</i>	طالب/طلاب~طلبة

- (1.3) Plural CiCaaC (*fi^{aa}aal* فِعال) from singular CVCVC or CVCC (*fa^{al}al* فاعِل, *fa^{ul}ul* فاعِل, *fa^ll* فاعِل)

man/men	<i>rajul/rijaal</i>	رجل/رجال
mountain/s	<i>jabal/jibaaal</i>	جبل/جبال
sand/s	<i>raml/rimaal</i>	رمل/رمال
earthenware jar/s	<i>jarra/jiraar</i>	جرة/جرار
basket/s	<i>salla/silaal</i>	سلة/سلال

- (1.4) Plural CuCaC (*fu^{al}al* فُعَل) from singular CVCCa (*fa^{la}la*, *fu^{la}la*, *fi^{la}la* فُعَلَة)

state/s	<i>dawla/ duwal</i>	دولة/دول
room/s	<i>ghurfa/ ghuraf</i>	غرفة/غرف
sentence/s	<i>jumla/ jumal</i>	جملة/جمل
opportunity/ies	<i>furSa/ furaS</i>	فرصة/فرص
time period/s	<i>mudda/mudad</i>	مدة/مدد
picture/s	<i>Suura/Suwar</i>	صورة/صور
nation/s	<i>'umma/'umam</i>	أمة/أمم

³¹ For example, the noun *'aamil* in the singular can mean either 'worker' or 'factor.' When it means 'worker' the plural is *'ummaal*; when it means 'factor,' the plural is *'awaamil*.

(1.5) Plural CuCuC (*fu^uul* فعل) from singular: CVCVVC(a) (*faⁱiil(a)* (فعيل-ة), *fi^aaal* فَعَال)

city/ies	<i>madiina/mudun</i>	مدينة/مدن
ship/s	<i>safiina/ sufun</i>	سفينة/سفن
newspaper/s	<i>SaHiifa/SuHuf</i>	صحيفة/صحف
path/s	<i>Tariiq/Turuq</i>	طريق/طرق
book/s	<i>kitaab/kutub</i>	كتاب/كتب
foundation/s	<i>‘asaas/ ‘usus</i>	أساس/أسس

(1.6) Plural CiCaC (*fi^aal* فعل) from singular CiCCa (*fiⁱla* فعلة) or CaCiiC (*faⁱiil* فَعِيل)

value/s	<i>qiima/qiyam</i>	قيمة/قيم
story/ies	<i>qiSSa/qiSaS</i>	قصة/قصص
idea/s	<i>fikra/fikar</i>	فكرة/فكر
charm/s; enchantment/s	<i>fitna/fitan</i>	فتنة/فتن
team/s	<i>fariiQ/firaq</i>	فريق/فرق

(1.7) Plural CaCCaa (*fa^alaa* فعلى) from singular CaCiiC (*faⁱiil* فَعِيل) or CaCCiC (*fa^ail* فَعَل): These plural forms go with certain adjectives that are also used as substantives referring to human beings:

dead	<i>mayyit/mawtaa</i>	ميت/موتى
killed	<i>qatiil/qatlaa</i>	قتيل/قتلى
wounded	<i>jariiH/jarHaa</i>	جريح/جرحي
sick	<i>mariiD/marDaa</i>	مرضى/مرضى

(2) Plurals with vowel change and affixation of consonant:

(2.1) Plural: ‘aCCaaC (‘af^aaal أفعال) from singular: CVCC (*fa^al* فعل) or CVCVC (*fa^aal* فعل) or hollow: CVVC (*faal* فال, *fuul* فول, *fiil* فيل): This plural involves the prefixing of *hamza* plus *fatHa* to the word stem and the shift of vowel pattern to a long /aa/ between the second and third radicals:

dream/s	<i>Hulm/ ‘aHlaam</i>	حلم/أحلام
tower/s	<i>burj/ ‘abraaj</i>	برج/أبراج
profit/s	<i>ribH/ ‘arbaaH</i>	ربح/أرباح
section/s	<i>qism/ ‘aqsaam</i>	قسم/أقسام

thing/s	shayʔ / ʔashyaa ³²	شيء / أشياء
color/s	lawn / ʔalwaan	لون / ألوان
error/s	ghalaT / ʔaghlaaT	غلط / أغلط
foot/feet	qadam / ʔaqdaam	قدم / أقدام
door/s	baab / ʔabwaab	باب / أبواب
market/s	suuq / ʔaswaaq	سوق / أسواق
bag/s	kiis / ʔakyaas	كيس / أكياس
holiday/s	ʔiid / ʔaʔyaad	عيد / أعياد

Borrowed words that fit the pattern:

film/s	film / ʔafilaam	فلم / أفلام
ton/s	Tann / ʔaTnaan	طن / أطنان
mile/s	miil / ʔamyaaal	ميل / أميال

Variants:

day/s	yawm / ʔayyaam ³³	يوم / أيام
thousand/s	ʔalf / ʔaalaaf	ألف / آلاف

(2.2) Plurals of ‘paucity’: ʔaCCuC (ʔaf ʔul أفعال) and CiCCa (fi ʔla فعلة)

(*jamʕ al-qilla* جمع القلة): Certain nouns have an additional plural form which denotes a ‘plural of paucity,’ usually considered to be in the range of three to ten items:

river/s	nahr / ʔanhur	نهر / أنهر
month/s	shahr / ʔashhur	شهر / أشهر
youth/s	fatan / fitya	فتى / فتية

(2.2.1) The plural of paucity can be contrasted with *jamʕ al-kathra* جمع الكثرة, the plural that indicates many:

ʔanhur (a few rivers) / ʔanhaar~nuhuur (many rivers)	أنهر / أنهار ~ نهور
ʔashhur (a few months) / shuhuur (many months)	أشهر / شهور
fitya (a few youths) / fityaan (many youths)	فتية / فتیان

³² The plural ʔashyaaʔ ‘things’ is diptote despite the fact that the final *hamza* is part of the root. See section 5.4.2.2 in this chapter for further discussion of diptotes and diptote patterns.

³³ By virtue of phonological rules that prevent the sequence /-yw-/ in *ʔaywaam, the plural form becomes ʔayyaam, with assimilation of the *waaw* to the *yaaʔ*. Likewise, *ʔaʔ laaf is realized as ʔaalaaf in order to avoid the sequence /ʔaʔ/. Other plurals of this pattern include ‘literature’ ʔadab / ʔaadaab أدب and ‘vestige’ ʔathar / ʔaathaar آثار.

(2.3) Addition of *nuun*: Plural: CVCCaan (*fa'laan* فعلان/*fi'laan* فعلان/*fu'laan* فعلان):

country/ies	<i>bilaad/buldaan</i>	بلاد/بلدان
neighbor/s	<i>jaar/jiiraan</i> ³⁴	جار/جيران
fire/s	<i>naar/niiraaan</i>	نار/نيران
worm/s	<i>duuda/diidaan</i>	دودة/ديدان
bull/s	<i>thawr/thiiraan</i>	ثور/ثيران

(2.4) Addition of *taa' marbuuTa*: Sometimes a *taa' marbuuTa* is suffixed as part of a plural pattern. When used with the plural, it does not signify feminine gender.

(2.4.1) Plural CaCaaCiCa (*fa'aalila* فعالة). This is often used to pluralize names of groups or professions borrowed from other languages:

professor/s	<i>'ustaadh / 'asaatidha</i>	أستاذ/أساتذة
doctor/s	<i>duktuur/dakaatira</i>	دكتور/دكاترة
philosopher/s	<i>foyulusuuff/falaasifa</i>	فيلسوف/فلاسفة
Bolshevik/s	<i>bulshifiyy/balaashifa</i>	بلشفي/بلاشفة
African/s	<i>'ifriiqiyy/'afaariqa~ 'ifriiqiyy-uuna</i>	إفريقي/أفارقة~إفريقيون
pharaoh/s	<i>fir'awn/faraa'ina</i>	فرعون/فراعنة
bishop/s	<i>'usquf/'asaafiq~'asaaqif</i>	أسقف/أساقفة~أساقف

(2.4.2) Plural CaaCa (*faala* فالة): Used with nouns derived from hollow verbs:

sir/s	<i>sayyid/saada</i>	سيد/سادة
leader/s	<i>qaa' id/qaada</i>	قائد/قادة

(2.4.3) Plural CuCaat (*fu'aat* فعاة): Used with active participles of Form I defective verbs:

infantryman/infantry	<i>maashin/mushaat</i>	ماش/مشاة
judge/s	<i>qaaDin/quDaat</i>	قاضي/قضاة
reciter/s	<i>raawin/ruwaat</i>	راو/رواة

³⁴ Phonological rules prevent the sequence /-iw-/ in the hypothetical form *jiwraan, and it is realized as *jiiraan*, the /i/ sound assimilating the waaw. The same principle applies to *naar/niiraan* and others.

marksman/-men	raamin/rumaat	رامٍ/رُماة
dilettante/s; fan/s	haawin/huwaat	هاوٍ/هواة

(2.4.4) **Plural CaCaCa (*fa'ala* فَعْلَة) from singular CaaCiC:** This plural often alternates with CuCCaaC.

student/s	Taalib/Talaba~Tullaab	طالب/طالبة ~ طلاب
servant/s	xaadim/xadama~xuddaam	خادم/خدمة ~ خدام
guard/s	Haaris/Harasa~Hurraas	حارس/حرسة ~ حراس

(2.4.5) **Plural 'aCCiCa (*'af'ila* أَفْعَلَة) from singular CVCaaC (*fa'aal* فَعَال, *fi'aal* فِعَال):** In this broken plural pattern there is addition of both *hamza* at the start of the word and *taa' marbuuTa* at the end of the word:

carpet/s	bisaaT / 'absiTa ~ busuT	بساط/أبسطة ~ بسط
answer/s	jawaab/'ajwiba	جواب/أجوبة
clothes	libaas / 'albisa	لباس/ألبسة
mixture/s	mizaaj/'amzija	مزاج/أمزجة
brain/s	dimaagh/'admigha	دماغ/أدمغة

(2.4.6) **Plural CaCaayaa (*fa'aayaa* فَعَايَا):** This plural is used for certain feminine nouns, especially if they are defective or hamzated. It is invariable, always ending with 'alif.

gift	hadiyya/hadaayaa	هدية/هدايا
sin	xaTii'a/xaTaayaa	خطيئة/خطايا
corner	zaawiya/zawaayaa	زاوية/زوايا

3.2.3.2 **Diptote pattern broken plural (*mamnuu' min al-Sarf* ممنوع من الصرف):** A number of common plural patterns are diptote and belong to conjugation five (see section 5.4.2.2). Among them are the following:

(1) **Plural: CuCaCaa' (*fu'ala* فُعَلَاء) from singular: CaCiC (*fa'iil* فَعِيل):**

This plural is used only for human beings:

prince/s	'amiir/ 'umaraa'	أمير/أمراء
president/s	ra'iiis/ ru'asaa'	رئيس/رؤساء
minister/s	waziir/ wuzaraa'	وزير/وزراء
leader/s	za'iim/ zu'amaa'	زعيم/زعماء

expert/s	xabiir/xubaraa'	خبير/خبراء
poor person/s	faqiir/fuqaraa'	فقير/فقراء

- (2) Plural ^aCCiCaa' (^aaf[°]ilaa' أفعاء) from singular CaCiiC (fa[°]iil فعيل). This broken plural pattern prefixes and suffixes *hamza*. It is used with humans only:

physician/s	Tabiib/ ^a Tibbaa' ³⁵	طبيب/ أطباء
friend/s	Sadiiq/ ^a Sdiqaa'	صديق/ أصدقاء
relative/s	qariib/ ^a aqribaa'	قريب/ أقرباء
loved one/s	Habiib/ ^a Hibbaa'	حبيب/ أحباء

- (3) Plural CaCaaCiC (fa[°]aalil فعالل). This is a frequent plural pattern. It is used primarily with words that have four consonants in the singular, but can also be used for plurals of words with three consonants in the singular. It has a number of variations, as follows:

- (3.1) Nouns derived from trilateral roots where the singular has a prefixed *miim*. For example:

- (3.1.1) Nouns of place:

center/s	markaz/ maraakiz	مركز/ مراكز
kingdom/s	mamlaka/ mamaalik	مملكة/ ممالك
restaurant/s	maT [°] am/maTaa [°] im	مطعم/ مطاعم
mine/s	manjam/manaajim	منجم/ مناجم

- (3.1.2) Nouns of instrument:

towel/s	minshafa/manaashif	منشفة/ مناشف
broom/s	miknaas/makaanis	مكناس/ مكans
elevator/s	miS [°] ad/maSaa [°] id	مصعد/ مصاعد

- (3.1.3) Participles: (Form IV AP nonhuman):

problem/s	mushkila/ mashaakil	مشكلة/ مشاكل
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- (3.2) Other patterns of trilateral roots with added consonants:

ladder/s	sullam /salaalim	سلم/ سلالم
foreigner/s	^a ajnabiyy / ^a ajaanib	أجنبي/ أجانب

³⁵ Phonological rules prevent the sequence ^aaTbibaa', so the medial /i/ shifts and the form becomes ^aaTibbaa'.

middle part/s	^ʾ awsaT/ ^ʾ awaasiT	أوسط/أواسط
ticket/s	tadhkira/tadhaakir	تذكرة/تذاكر
fingertip/s	^ʾ unmula/ ^ʾ anaamil	أنملة/أنامل

(3.3) Nouns derived from quadriliteral roots:

frog/s	Dafda ^ʿ /Dafaadi ^ʿ	ضفدع/ضفادع
element/s	^ʿ unSur/ ^ʿ anaaSir	عنصر/عناصر
hotel/s	funduq/fanaadiq	فندق/فنادق
dagger/s	xanjar/xanaajir	خنجر/خنجر
bomb/s	qunbula/ qanaabil	قنبلة/قنابل
translation/s	tarjama/taraajim	ترجمة/تراجم

(3.4) Nouns that are borrowed from other languages, but fit the pattern:

consul/s	qunSul/qanaaSil	قنصل/قناصل
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(3.5) Certain quinquiliteral (five-consonant) nouns reduce themselves by one consonant in order to fit this quadriliteral plural pattern:

spider/s	^ʿ ankabuut/ ^ʿ anaakib (omission of /t/)	عنكبوت/عناكب
program/s	barnaamaj/baraamij (omission of /n/)	برنامج/برامج
index/es	fihrist/fahaaris (omission of /t/)	فهرست/فهارس

(3.6) Variants on fa^ʿaalil فعالل:

A frequent variant on this plural pattern is the insertion of an extra sound in order to create the pattern: waaw or hamza, typically from singular CVCVVC or CVCVVCa:

(3.6.1) Plural CaCaa^ʾiC (fa^ʿaa^ʾil (فعائل): medial hamza insertion:

newspaper/s	jariida/ jaraa ^ʾ id	جريدة/جرائد
minute/s	daqiiqa/ daqaa ^ʾ iq	دقيقة/دقائق
result/s	natiija/ nataa ^ʾ ij	نتيجة/نتائج
church/es	kaniisa/ kanaa ^ʾ is	كنيسة/كنائس
garden/s	Hadiiqa/Hadaa ^ʾ iq	حديقة/حدائق
ode/s	qaSiida/qaSaa ^ʾ id	قصيدة/قصائد

(3.6.2) Plural ^ʾaCaaCiC (^ʾafaa^ʾil (أفاعيل): initial hamza insertion:

place/s	makaan/ ^ʾ amaakin	مكان/أماكن
relative/s	qariib/ ^ʾ aqaarib	قريب/أقارب

(3.6.3) Plural CawaaCiC (*fawaaʿil* فواعل): *waaw* insertion:

(3.6.3.1) Active participles

Used primarily with Form I active participles (CaaCiC or CaaCiCa) that do not refer to human beings:

salary/ies	<i>raatib/rawaatib</i>	راتب/رواتب
objection/s	<i>maaniʿ / mawaaniʿ</i>	مانع/موانع
capital/s	<i>ʿaaSima/ ʿawaaSim</i>	عاصمة/عواصم
fruit/s	<i>faakiha/fawaakih</i>	فاكهة/فواكه
mosque/s	<i>jaamiʿ / jawaamiʿ</i>	جامع/جوامع
street/s	<i>shaariʿ / shawaariʿ</i>	شارع/شوارع
ring/s	<i>xaatim/xawaatim</i>	خاتم/خواتم
incident/s	<i>Haadith/Hawaadith</i>	حادث/حوادث
last part/s	<i>ʿaaxir/ ʿawaaxir</i>	آخر/أواخر

(3.6.3.2) Used with a few words that have the Form I active participle pattern and that refer to human beings:

monarch/s	<i>ʿaahil/ ʿawaahil</i>	عاهل/عواهل
pregnant (one/s)	<i>Haamil/Hawaamil</i>	حامل/حوامل

(3.6.4) Plural CaCaaCin (*faʿaalin* فعال): defective noun variants: When the *faʿaalin* plural pattern is used with nouns from defective roots, or nouns with defective plural patterns, it ends with two *kasras* when it is indefinite. These *kasras* are not regular nunation but substitute for the missing *waaw* or *yaaʿ* from the root. These plural forms are still diptote and therefore do not take regular nunation.³⁶

coffeehouse/s	<i>maqhan/maqaahin</i>	مقهى/مقاهٍ
range/s	<i>marman/maraamin</i>	مرمى/مرامٍ
night/s	<i>layl/layaalin</i> ³⁷	ليل/ليالٍ
effort/s	<i>masʿan/masaaʿin</i>	معى/مساعٍ

(4) Diptote plural: CaCaaCiiC (*faʿaaliil* فعاليل). This is a four-consonant pattern with one short and two long vowels that applies mainly to the following types of singular nouns:

³⁶ See section 5.4.3 in this chapter for declensions of these words.

³⁷ A few words, such as *layl*, are not from defective roots, yet they have a plural form that uses the defective pattern. The words *ʿarD/ ʿaraaDin* أرض/أراضٍ ('earth, land') and *yad/ʿayaadin* يد/أيادٍ ('hand') have these plurals as well.

(4.1) **Singular CVCCVVC:** Used with words where the singular has an added consonant and there is a long vowel between the second and third root consonants:

(4.1.1) **Prefixed hamza:**

pipe/s	^ʾ unbuub/ ^ʾ anaabiib	أنبوب/ أنابيب
week/s	^ʾ usbuu ^c / ^ʾ asaabii ^c	أسبوع/ أسابيع
legend/s	^ʾ usTuura/ ^ʾ asaaTiir	أسطورة/ أساطير
fleet/s	^ʾ usTuul/ ^ʾ asaaTiil	أسطول/ أساطيل

(4.1.2) **Doubled middle root consonant:**

window/s	shubbaak/shabaabiik	شباك/ شبّابيك
prayer rug/s	sajjaada/sajaajiid	سجّادة/ سجّاجيد

(4.1.3) **Prefixed miim:**

(4.1.3.1) **Passive participles:** Form I passive participles serving as substantives:

decree/s	marsuum/maraasiim	مرسوم/ مراسيم
topic/s	mawDuu ^c / mawaaDii ^c	موضوع/ مواضيع
concept/s	mafhuum/mafaahiim	مفهوم/ مفاهيم
content/s	maDmuun/maDaamiin	مضمون/ مضامين

(4.1.3.2) **Some nouns of instrument:**

key/s	miftaaH/mafaatiiH	مفتاح/ مفاتيح
saw/s	minshaar/manaashiir	منشار/ مناشير

(4.1.4) **Prefixed taa^ʾ:** Certain Form II verbal nouns as a plural variant:

report/s	taqriir/taqaariir	تقرير/ تقارير
arrangement/s	tadbiir/-aat~tadaabiir	تدبير/ -ات ~ تدابير
detail/s	tafSiil/-aat~tafaaSiil	تفصيل/ -ات ~ تفاصيل
statue/s	timthaal/tamaathiil	تمثال/ تماثيل
drill/s	tamriin/-aat~tamaariin	تمرين/ -ات ~ تمارين

(4.2) **Quadriliteral root nouns (singular pattern: CVCCVVC):**

crocodile/s	timsaaH/tamaasiiH	تمساح/ تماسيح
box/es	Sanduuq/Sanaadiiq	صندوق/ صناديق
title/s; address/es	^c unwaan/ ^c anaawiin	عنوان/ عناوين

orchard/s	bustaan/basaatiin	بستان/بساتين
hornet/s	zunbuur/zanaabiir	زنبور/زنابير
volcano/es	burkaan/baraaikiin	بركان/براكين

(4.3) Borrowed words that fit the singular CVCCVVC pattern:

million/s	milyuun/malaayiin	مليون/ملايين
billion/s	bilyuun/balaayiin	بليون/بلايين

- (5) Plural CawaaCiiC (*fawaa°iil* فواعيل) from singular CaaCuuC (*faa°uul* فاعول): variant from trilateral root with addition of *waaw*: This fits a trilateral root with two long vowels into a quadrilateral plural:

spy/ies	jaasuus/jawaasiis	جاسوس/جواسيس
law/s	qaanuun/qawaaniin	قانون/قوانين
nightmare/s	kaabuus/kawaabiis	كابوس/كوابيس
dictionary/ies	qaamuus/qawaamiis	قاموس/قواميس
rocket/s	Saaruux/Sawaariix	صاروخ/صواريخ

3.2.4 Plurals from different or modified roots

A few nouns have plurals with different or slightly variant lexical roots.

woman/women	imra°a/nisaa° ~ niswa ~ niswaan	امراة/نساء ~ نسوة ~ نسوان
horse/es	Hisaan/xayl	حصان/خيل
water/s	maa° /miyaah	ماء/مياه
mouth	fam / °afwaah	فم/أفواه

3.2.5 Plural of the plural: (*jam° al-jam°* جمع الجمع)

Occasionally a noun will have a plural form that can itself be made plural. It is not clear whether there is a semantic difference between simple plural and plural of plural or if the use is purely stylistic choice. Some instances of plural of plural include:

hand/s	yad / °ayd-in/°ayaad-in	يد/أيد/أياد
wound/s	jurH / juruuH/ juruuHaat	جرح/جروح/جروحات
path/s	TariiQ/ Turuq/ Turuqaat	طريق/طرق/طروقات
house/s	bayt/ buyuut/ buyuutaat	بيت/بيوت/بيوتات
pyramid/s	haram/ °ahraam/°ahraamaat	هرم/أهرام/أهرامات

In the following case, the plural of the plural has a semantic implication: the first plural is straightforward, but the plural of the plural implies distinction as well as plurality: ‘distinctive men, men of importance.’

man/men/men of distinction *rajul/rijaal/rijaalaat* رجل/رجال/رجالات

4 Definiteness and indefiniteness

Arabic substantives may be marked for definiteness or indefiniteness. There is a definite article in Arabic, but it is not an independent word, it is a prefix *al-*. The indefinite marker (“a” or “an” in English) is not a separate word in Arabic. It is a suffix, *-n*, referred to technically as “nunation” (from the name of the letter/sound *nuun*). Thus, in Arabic, the definiteness marker is attached to the beginning of a word and the indefiniteness marker is attached to the end of a word. They are, of course, mutually exclusive.

4.1 Definiteness

Specifying definiteness, or determination, is a way of specifying or restricting the meaning of a noun. Arabic nouns are determined or made definite in three ways:

- (1) By prefixing the definite article */al-;*
- (2) By using the noun as first term of an *’iDaa’fa* (annexation structure);
- (3) By suffixing a possessive pronoun to the noun.

4.1.1 The definite article */al-;*

This function word has several important features.³⁸

4.1.1.1 IT IS A PREFIX: It is not an independent word, it is a prefix, or proclitic particle. It is affixed to the beginning of a word and written as part of it.

the bread	<i>al-xubz</i>	الخبز
the pyramids	<i>al-’ahraam</i>	الأهرام
the joy	<i>al-faraH</i>	الفرح

4.1.1.2 IT IS SPELLED WITH *hamzat al-waSi*: Although spelled with *’alif-laam*, and most often transliterated as “*al-*,” the *’alif* in this word is not a vowel and is therefore not pronounced; rather, it is a seat for a *hamza* and a short vowel *-a* (*fatHa*) which is pronounced when the word is utterance-initial.

When the definite article is not the first word in an utterance, then the *hamza* drops out, the */a/* vowel is replaced by the vowel that ends the previous word, and

³⁸ For more on the definite and indefinite articles, see Chapter 2, section 8.

there is no break between the words. There is, instead, a liaison, or smooth transition from one word to the next.³⁹

to the city	^ʔ <i>ilaa l-madiinat-i</i>	إلى المدينة
in Arabic	<i>bi-l-ʿarabiyyat-i</i>	بالعربية
the country's flag	^ʿ <i>alam-u l-balad-i</i>	علم البلد
The United Nations	<i>al-ʔumam-u l-muttaHidat-u</i>	الأمم المتحدة

4.1.1.3 ASSIMILATION OF *laam*: The nature of the first letter of a noun or adjective determines the pronunciation of /al-/. The letters of the Arabic alphabet are divided into two sections, one section whose members assimilate the /l/ sound and another section whose members allow the full pronunciation of /l/ of the definite article. See also Chapter 2, section 8.1.2.

- (1) **Sun letters** (*Huruuf shamsiyya* حروف شمسية): Certain sounds, or letters, when they begin a word, cause the *laam* of the definite article to assimilate or be absorbed into them in pronunciation (but not in writing). When this assimilation happens, it has the effect of doubling the first letter of the word. That letter is then written with a *shadda*, or doubling marker, and is pronounced more strongly. The list is:

نون , لام , ظاء , طاء , ضاد , صاد , شين , سين , زاي , راء , ذال , دال , ثاء , تاء
taaʔ, thaaʔ, daal, dhaal, raaʔ, zaay, siin, shiin, Saad, Daad, Taaʔ, Zaaʔ, laam, nuun

	Spelling	Arabic	Pronunciation
the leader	<i>al-zaʿiim</i>	الزعيم	<i>az-zaʿiim</i>
the fish	<i>al-samak</i>	السمك	<i>as-samak</i>
the honor	<i>al-sharaf</i>	الشرف	<i>ash-sharaf</i>
the fox	<i>al-thaʿlab</i>	الثعلب	<i>ath-thaʿlab</i>
the wolf	<i>al-dhiʿb</i>	الذئب	<i>adh-dhiʿb</i>

- (2) **Moon letters** (*Huruuf qamariyya* حروف قمرية): Moon letters do not absorb or assimilate the /l/ of the definite article. They are:

ياء , واو , هاء , ميم , كاف , قاف , فاء , غين , عين , خاء , حاء , جيم , باء , همزة
hamza, baaʔ, jiim, Haaʔ, xaaʔ, ʿayn, ghayn, faaʔ, qaaf, kaaf, miim, haaʔ, waaw, yaaʔ

³⁹ For further discussion of the definite article and *hamzat al-waSl*, see Chapter 2, section 8.

the village	<i>al-qarya</i>	القرية
the institute	<i>al-ma'had</i>	المعهد
the schedule	<i>al-jadwal</i>	الجدول
the government	<i>al-Hukuuma</i>	الحكومة

4.1.2 Uses of the definite article

The definite article is used in the following ways:

4.1.2.1 PREVIOUS SPECIFICATION: To specify a noun or noun phrase previously referred to or understood by the reader or hearer. For example:

المركز الجديد الذي أقيم	وجد في الملعب.
<i>al-markaz-u l-jadiid-u lladhii 'uqiim-a</i>	<i>wujid-a fii l-mal'ab-i.</i>
the new center which has been established	It was found in the playground.

أدرك أنه نسي الكلمة.
'adrak-a 'anna-hu nasiya l-kalimat-a.
 He realized that he had forgotten the word.

4.1.2.2 GENERIC USE: Here the definite article is used to specify a noun in general terms. In English, the generic use of the noun often omits the definite article, for example, "life is beautiful," "squirrels like nuts," "elephants never forget," "seeing is believing." Sometimes, also, in English, an indefinite article is used to refer to something in general: "a noun is a part of speech." In Arabic, the definite article is used when referring to something in general.

لا أحب المفاجآت.	المهم هو العمل.
I don't like surprises.	The important (thing) is work.
<i>laa 'u-Hibb-u l-mufaaja'aat-i.</i>	<i>al-muhimm-u huwa l-'amal-u.</i>

المنافسة قوية.	أحب التنظيم في العمل.
Competition is strong.	I like organization at work.
<i>al-munaa'fasat-u qawiyyat-un.</i>	<i>'u-Hibb-u l-tanZiim-a fii l-'amal-i.</i>

4.1.2.3 PLACE NAMES: Certain place names in Arabic contain the definite article. This includes names of places in the Arab world and elsewhere.

Khartoum	<i>al-xarTuum</i>	الخرطوم	Jordan	<i>al-'urdunn</i>	الأردن
Riyadh	<i>al-riyaaD</i>	الرياض	Iraq	<i>al-'iraaq</i>	العراق
Cairo	<i>al-qaahira</i>	القاهرة	Kuwait	<i>al-kuwayt</i>	الكويت

Morocco	<i>al-maghrib</i>	المغرب	Austria	<i>al-nimsaa</i>	النمسا
Algeria	<i>al-jazaa'ir</i>	الجزائر	China	<i>al-Siin</i>	الصين

4.1.2.4 NAMES OF THE DAYS OF THE WEEK: Names of the days of the week are considered definite and include the definite article. If they are modified by an adjective, it also carries the definite article:

الثلاثاء الماضي <i>al-thulaathaa'-a l-maaDiy-a</i> last Tuesday	أيام الجمعة والسبت <i>'ayyaam-a l-jum'at-i wa-l-sabt-i</i> on Fridays and Saturdays
بعد ظهر الثلاثاء الجاري <i>ba'd-a Zuhr-i l-thulaathaa'-i l-jaarii</i> next Tuesday afternoon	ليل الخميس والجمعة <i>layl-a l-xamiis-i wa-l-jum'at-i</i> on Thursday and Friday night

4.1.2.5 TIMES OF THE DAY: Referring to times of the day, the hours are specified with the definite article:

بين السادسة والثامنة من مساء غد <i>bayn-a l-saadisat-i wa-l-thaaminat-i min masaa'-i ghad-in</i> between six and eight o'clock ('the sixth and the eighth') tomorrow evening
في السابعة والربع <i>fii l-saabi'at-i wa-l-rub'-i</i> at seven fifteen ('the seventh and the quarter')

4.1.2.6 WITH ADJECTIVES: The definite article is used with adjectives when they modify definite nouns. This is described in greater detail in Chapter 10.

الأمين العام <i>al-'amiin-u l-'aamm-u</i> the secretary general	الهلال الخصيب <i>al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u</i> the Fertile Crescent	الحكاية القديمة <i>al-Hikaayat-u l-qadiimat-u</i> the old story
البحر المتوسط <i>al-baHr-u l-mutawassiT-u</i> the Mediterranean Sea	السفراء العرب <i>al-sufaraa'-u l-'arab-u</i> the Arab ambassadors	

The article is also used on stand-alone adjectives when they serve as substitutes for nouns.

many of us	<i>al-kathiir-u min-naa</i>	الكثير منا
the greatest	<i>al-'akbar-u</i>	الأكبر
at least	<i>'alaa l-'aqall-i</i>	على الأقل

4.1.2.7 WITH CARDINAL NUMBERS IN DEFINITE PHRASES:

في السنوات الخمس المقبلة	في الغرف التسع عشرة
<i>fii l-sanawaat-i l-xams-i l-muqbilat-i</i>	<i>fii l-ghuraf-i l-tis-a 'asharat-a</i>
in the next five years	in the nineteen rooms

4.1.3 Definiteness through annexation (إضافة *'iDaafa*)

A noun can become definite through being added or annexed to another (Arabic: *'iDaafa* 'addition; annexation' also called the "genitive construct"). The first term of an annexation structure cannot have the definite article because it is made definite by means of its annexation to another noun. When the annexing noun is definite, or a proper noun, the whole phrase is considered definite.

زعماء القبائل	حزب الله
<i>zu'amaa'-u l-qabaa'il-i</i>	<i>Hizb-u llaah-i</i>
the leaders of the tribes	the party of God
حلّ المشاكل	مدينة دمشق
<i>Hall-u l-mashaakil-i</i>	<i>madiinat-u dimashq-a</i>
the solution of the problems	the city of Damascus

If the annexing noun (the second noun in the phrase) is indefinite, the entire phrase is considered indefinite.⁴⁰

<i>Haqiibat-u yad-in</i>	a handbag	حقيبة يد
<i>Tabiib-u 'asnaan-in</i>	a dentist	طبيب أسنان
<i>marmaa Hajr-in</i>	a stone's throw	مرمى حجر

The *'iDaafa* is a very common syntactic structure in Arabic with a wide range of meanings, reflecting relationships of belonging, identification, and possession. For more detail and examples, see Chapter 8.

4.1.4 Definiteness through pronoun suffix

A third way for a noun to be made definite is to suffix a possessive pronoun. The pronoun is attached to a noun after the case marker. Note that a noun cannot have both the definite article and a pronoun suffix: they are mutually exclusive (just as one would not have "the my house" in English). Because a noun with a

⁴⁰ The first noun in the annexation structure looks definite because it does not have nunation, but it is not definite. For example, if it is modified, the adjective is indefinite:

a beautiful handbag	<i>Haqiibat-u yad-in jamiilat-un</i>	حقيبة يد جميلة
an Egyptian dentist	<i>Tabiib-u 'asnaan-in miSriyy-un</i>	طبيب أسنان مصري

pronoun suffix is definite, any adjective modifying that noun has the definite article, in agreement with the definiteness of the noun.

طاقتها

Taaqat-u-haa

its capacity

طاقتها التكريرية

Taaqat-u-haa l-takriiriyat-u

its refining capacity

بدأ مؤتمره

bada'a mu' tamar-a-hu

he began his conference

بدأ مؤتمره الصحافي

bada'a mu' tamar-a-hu l-Sihaafiyy-a

he began his press conference

في زيارته

fii ziyaarat-i-hi

on his visit

في زيارته الرسمية الأخيرة

fii ziyaarat-i-hi l-rasmiyyat-i l-'axiirat-i

on his last official visit

4.2 Indefiniteness

4.2.1 Writing and pronunciation: nunation (*tanwiin* تنوين)

Indefiniteness as a noun feature is usually marked by a suffixed /-n/ sound, which is written in a special way as a variation of the case-marking short vowel at the end of a word.⁴¹ The technical term for this is “nunation” in English, and *tanwiin* تنوين in Arabic. The suffixed /-n/ sound is *not* written by using the Arabic letter *nuun*. Instead, it is signaled by writing the short case-marking vowel twice. Therefore, the names of the nunation markers are:

Dammataani	two Dammas	ːː / ː
kasrataani	two kasras	ː
fatHataani	two fatHas	ː / ː

Whereas the definite article is visible in Arabic script, the indefinite marker normally is not, since it attaches itself to the inflectional short vowel suffixes.⁴²

In general, the nominative (*Dammataani*) and genitive (*kasrataani*) forms of nunation are not pronounced in pause form. The accusative (*fatHataani*), however, is often pronounced, even in pause form, especially in common spoken Arabic adverbial phrases:

always	daa'im-an	دائماً	especially	xuSuuS-an	خصوصاً
never	'abad-an	أبداً	exactly	tamaam-an	تماماً

⁴¹ See also Chapter 2, section 8.2.

⁴² The exception to this is the accusative indefinite suffix, -an, which is written into the script with an ːalif and two fatHas. See section 4.2.1.5(2) for further description.

4.2.1.1 MASCULINE SINGULAR INDEFINITE WORD:

<i>bayt</i> 'a house'		
Nominative	<i>bayt-un</i>	بَيْتٌ
Genitive	<i>bayt-in</i>	بَيْتٍ
Accusative	<i>bayt-an</i>	بَيْتًا

4.2.1.2 FEMININE SINGULAR INDEFINITE WORD:

<i>‘aaSifa</i> 'a storm'		
Nominative	<i>‘aaSifat-un</i>	عاصِفَةٌ
Genitive	<i>‘aaSifat-in</i>	عاصِفَةٍ
Accusative	<i>‘aaSifat-an</i>	عاصِفَةً

4.2.1.3 BROKEN PLURAL INDEFINITE WORD:

<i>nujuum</i> 'stars'		
Nominative	<i>nujuum-un</i>	نُجُومٌ
Genitive	<i>nujuum-in</i>	نُجُومٍ
Accusative	<i>nujuum-an</i>	نُجُومًا

4.2.1.4 SOUND FEMININE PLURAL INDEFINITE WORD: The sound feminine plural does not take *fatHa* or *fatHataani*; the genitive and accusative forms are identical:

<i>kalimaat</i> 'words'		
Nominative	<i>kalimaat-un</i>	كَلِمَاتٌ
Genitive	<i>kalimaat-in</i>	كَلِمَاتٍ
Accusative	<i>kalimaat-in</i>	كَلِمَاتٍ

4.2.1.5 NOTES ABOUT NUNATION: There are several things to note about the writing and pronunciation of nunation:

- (1) First, the **nominative**, *Dammataan*, is more often written as a *Damma* with a “tail” or flourish, [◌^{*}] rather than two separate *Dammas* [◌◌^{*}].

a schedule	<i>jadwal-un</i>	جدول [*]	a colt	<i>muhr-un</i>	مهر [*]
a steamship	<i>baaxirat-un</i>	باخرة [*]	a bell	<i>jaras-un</i>	جرس [*]

- (2) **Second, the accusative**, *fatHataan*, is often accompanied by an ^ʾ*alif*. This ^ʾ*alif* is a spelling convention and is not pronounced. It is considered to be a chair or seat for the two *fatHas* to perch on. It is visible in Arabic script.

a rocket	<i>Saaruux-an</i>	صاروخاً	a knife	<i>sikkiin-an</i>	سكيناً
a rabbit	^ʾ <i>arnab-an</i>	أرنباً	a saddle	<i>sarj-an</i>	سرجاً

- (2.1) If a word in the accusative ends with a *taaʾ marbuuTa*, or a *hamza*, or preceded by ^ʾ*alif*, then the ^ʾ*alif* “chair” is not used and the *fatHataan* perch right on top of the *hamza* or *taaʾ marbuuTa*:

an evening	<i>masaaʾ-an</i>	مساءً	a melon	<i>baTTixat-an</i>	بطيخةً
a meeting	<i>liqaaʾ-an</i>	لقاءً	a permit	^ʾ <i>ijaazat-an</i>	إجازةً
a breeze	<i>hawaaʾ-an</i>	هواءً	a language	<i>lughat-an</i>	لغةً

Examples:

واكتشف أيضاً أخطاءً.

wa-ktashafa ʾayD-an ʾaxTaaʾ-an.

He also discovered mistakes.

حضرُوا لقاءً هاماً.

HaDar-uu liqaaʾ-an haamm-an.

They attended an important meeting.

- (3) **Helping vowel with nunation:** Because nunation causes the pronunciation of a word to end with a consonant (*/-n/*), there may be a need for a helping vowel after the nunation if, for instance, the nunated word is followed directly by a noun or adjective with the definite article thus creating a consonant cluster. That helping vowel is pronounced as *kasra* (*/-i-/*), but it is not written. Wright, in discussing this form of helping vowel, gives the example:

محمد النبي

*muHammad-un-i l-nabiyy-u*⁴³

Muhammad the Prophet

⁴³ Wright 1967, I:22.

- (4) **Words that do not take nunation:** There are some words that do not take nunation when they are indefinite. This includes words that fall into the diptote declension (see section 5.4.2.2. in this chapter), words that end with the sound masculine plural (-uuna or -iina) (see section 5.4.2.1., subsection (2) in this chapter), words that end with the dual suffix (-aani and -ayni) and invariable words (see section 5.4.5. in this chapter).

Diptotes:

ambassadors *sufaraaʔ-u* سفراء better *ʔaHsan-u* أحسن

Sound masculine plural:

engineers *muhandis-uuna* مهندسون Egyptians *miSriyy-uuna* مصريون

Dual:

two states *dawlat-aani* دولتان two poets *shaaʕir-aani* شاعران

Invariable nouns:

chaos *fawDaa* فوضى issues *qaDaayaa* قضايا

4.2.2 Uses of the indefinite

4.2.2.1 TO EXPRESS NON-DEFINITE STATUS: Nunation is used on Arabic nouns and adjectives to mark indefinite status. An adjective modifying an indefinite noun is also indefinite.

في عمر مبكر
fii ʕumr-in mubakkir-in
at an early age

حققنا تقدماً كافياً.
Haqqaq-naa taqaddum-an kaafiy-an.
We have achieved adequate progress.

إلى دولة جديدة
ʔilaa dawlat-in jadiidat-in
to a new state

هذا الكتاب عمل رائد.
haadhaa l-kitaab-u ʕamal-un raaʕ id-un.
This book is a pioneering work.

4.2.2.2 MASCULINE PROPER NAMES: A perhaps unusual (to English speakers) function of the indefinite marker is its use on many Arabic masculine given names. They are **semantically definite, but morphologically indefinite**. This is so because many of these Arabic names are derived from adjectives which describe particular attributes. Nonetheless, given names are considered definite and agreeing words are definite.

Muhammad 'praised'	<i>muHammad-un</i>	محمد	Salim 'flawless'	<i>saliim-un</i>	سليم
Munir 'radiant'	<i>muniir-un</i>	منير	Ali 'exalted'	<i>ʕaliyy-un</i>	علي

Examples of agreement:

محمد الخامس

muHammad-un-i l-xaamis-u

Muhammad the fifth

Nunation is not marked on all masculine names, only those derived from Arabic adjectives or participles. For example, the names *ʿaHmad*, *ʿibraahiim*, *sulaymaan*, and *yuusuf* are diptote and do not take nunation.⁴⁴ Most female names are also diptote and do not take nunation.⁴⁵

4.2.2.3 ADVERBIAL ACCUSATIVE EXPRESSIONS: Adverbial expressions in Arabic tend to be in the accusative case, and quite often in the indefinite accusative. It is therefore common to see the indefinite accusative marker when reading Arabic texts. Another characteristic of the indefinite accusative marker, especially with adverbs, is that it is pronounced as well as written, whereas the nominative and genitive forms of nunation are not normally pronounced in spoken Arabic.⁴⁶

The adverbial use of the accusative is described in greater detail in the section on the accusative case, but here are some examples in the indefinite accusative (see also 4.2.1 above):

immediately	<i>fawr-an</i>	فوراً	a little (bit)	<i>qaliil-an</i>	قليلاً
daily	<i>yawmiyy-an</i>	يومياً	very	<i>jidd-an</i>	جداً

5 Case inflection

Arabic nouns, participles, adjectives and, to some extent, adverbs have word-final (or desinential) inflection. That is, they are marked for **case**, which indicates the syntactic function of the word and its relationship with other words in the sentence.⁴⁷ In Arabic, the term for case marking is (*ʿiʿraab* إعراب).⁴⁸ In respect to case

⁴⁴ For the reasons behind this see section 5.4.2.2 on the diptote declension.

⁴⁵ There are a few exceptions. The feminine name *hind-un*, for example, may take nunation. But this is exceptional.

⁴⁶ Pronunciation of nunation at the end of a word is apparently still heard in some rural vernacular forms of Arabic. For the most part, the only form of nunated ending that is regularly pronounced in spoken MSA or in the urban vernaculars is the accusative (*-an*).

⁴⁷ Blake (1994, 1) defines case as follows: “Case is a system of marking dependent nouns for the type of relationship they bear to their heads. Traditionally the term refers to inflectional marking, and, typically, case marks the relationship of a noun to a verb at the clause level or of a noun to a preposition, postposition or another noun at the phrase level.”

⁴⁸ The Arabic term *ʿiʿraab* إعراب refers to desinential inflection in general: not only case markers on nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, but also mood markers (indicative, subjunctive, jussive) on verbs. Arab grammarians classify case marking and mood marking together in one category, and give them similar labels. For more on this see Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 53-55, and Ryding 1993.

inflection, Arabic resembles some European languages such as German, Russian, and Latin.

Arabic has three cases: nominative (*rafʿ* رفع), genitive (*jarr* جر), and accusative (*naṣb* نصب). As a general rule, these cases are indicated by short vowel suffixes: -u (*Damma*) for nominative, -i (*kasra*) for genitive, and -a (*fatHa*) for accusative. However, these short vowels are not the only ways to mark case. Words inflected for case fall into several declensions or inflection classes and therefore inflect for these three cases in different ways.

Case marking is placed at the end of a noun or adjective. If a noun or adjective is definite, then the case-marking short vowel is suffixed at the very end of the word. If a noun or adjective is indefinite, the case marker is followed by an indefinite marker (a final /-n/ sound, “nunation” in English and *tanwiin* in Arabic), indicated in writing by the convention of doubling the short vowel case ending, e.g., -un / ; -in / ; -an / (see above).

Case is one of the most challenging inflectional categories in MSA for several reasons. First of all, it depends on rules of syntax for its implementation, and second, in many ways it is redundant. Moreover, colloquial forms of Arabic do not have case marking, so case is used only in written Arabic.⁴⁹ Even for native speakers of Arabic, therefore, the case system is learned through formal instruction.

5.1 Pronunciation and writing conventions

The Arabic case-ending system consists primarily of short, word-final vowels, *which are invisible* in conventional written Arabic texts.⁵⁰ This can hinder clear-cut understanding of case inflections and sentential relations. Furthermore, because the nature of these case marking vowels is dependent on a word’s function in a sentence, they vary from one context to another, and only if one knows the rules of grammatical usage can one ascertain what the noun-final case markers are for any particular sentence.

The Arabic case-marking system, then, remains mostly hidden from view in written texts and is apparent only when the text is read out loud with complete

⁴⁹ This is true for the colloquial variants of spoken Arabic and even for educated spoken Arabic or formal spoken Arabic. Case does not play a significant role in these forms of the language.

⁵⁰ Exceptions to this general rule include case marking that occurs as long vowels in, for example, the dual suffixes (-aani/ -ayni), the sound masculine plural suffixes (-uuna/-iina) and the “five nouns” that inflect, under certain conditions, with long vowels (see section 5.4.1.c.). Another partial exception is the word-final *ʾalif* that appears in written Arabic script on many words as a seat for *fatHataan*, the indefinite accusative marker (e.g., *ʾaxiir-an* ‘finally’, أخيراً, *ʾaHyaan-an* ‘sometimes’) أحياناً). This particular form of case ending (the indefinite accusative ending in -an) is often pronounced, even in pause form.

pronunciation of all vowels (i.e., in “full” form).⁵¹ The ability to use and pronounce accurate case marking in written or literary Arabic is not an automatic skill but a rigorous task, even for educated native speakers. It is also therefore the mark of a well-educated or learned individual. The case-marking rules are used and understood primarily by scholars and specialists in Arabic grammar, linguistics, scripture, and literature.⁵² Learners of Arabic as a foreign language need to know the basic rules of word order, inflection, agreement, and governance in order to make sense of Arabic texts. The degree to which they need knowledge of explicit case marking rules depends on the structure and goals of particular academic programs, and on the goals of individual learners.⁵³

In this book the case-marking system is described in some detail, but not exhaustively. For those who wish to delve more deeply into Arabic morphosyntax, Wright (1967) is recommended as are Hasan (1987) especially volumes II and IV; Fleisch (1961, 268–82), Beeston (1970, 51–55), and Cowan (1958). For a recent theoretical study of case in general, a good reference is Blake 1994.

5.2 Case marking and declensions

Arabic case marking takes place either as a short vowel suffix or as a modification of a long vowel suffix. Cases are marked on nouns, adjectives, and certain adverbs. The categories described below show the most common instances of particular case functions in MSA. It has not been traditional to designate Arabic nouns as belonging to particular declensions or inflectional classes, except to refer to them as “triptote” (showing *three* different inflectional markers, one for each case) or “diptote” (showing only *two* different inflectional markers when indefinite, nominative, and genitive/accusative). However, for reference purposes here, each inflectional type is classified into a separate, numbered declension.⁵⁴

⁵¹ In reading written Arabic aloud, some narrators read most of the words in pause form, omitting desinential inflections. News broadcasters, for example, vary in their formality and in the degree to which they use case-marking in narrating news items. Some seldom use it; others use it partially, and some use it more consistently. Officials giving formal speeches also vary in the degree to which they pronounce case marking. Only in formal academic and religious contexts is pronunciation of full desinential inflection considered necessary or appropriate.

⁵² Holes (1995, 142) states: “As a means of syntactic disambiguation in modern written Arabic, case plays almost no role (inevitably so, since in most cases it is carried by short vowel distinctions which are unmarked), and, despite the importance which the indigenous tradition of grammatical description and language pedagogy attaches to it, it is clear, when one examines ancient textual material, that the functional load of the case endings was no higher in the Classical period than it is now.”

⁵³ See, for example, the article by Khaldieh (2001) titled: “The relationship between knowledge of *i‘raab*, lexical knowledge, and reading comprehension of nonnative readers of Arabic.”

⁵⁴ It should be understood that these declensional identifications are not standardized; they are named as such in this book to facilitate description and reference.

5.2.1 Shift of declension

In Indo-European languages a noun usually belongs to a particular inflectional class or declension in both the singular and the plural. However, in Arabic, the number suffixes (duals and sound plurals) and even the internal broken plural pattern, **can shift a noun into a different inflectional class**. The criteria for identifying declensions depend on the nature of the noun stem and also whether or not it includes a dual or plural number inflection.

5.3 Case categories and their functions

The type of case marking on a noun or adjective depends on its form and function. That is, it is determined by the inflectional class (declension) of the word involved and the role of the word within a specific sentence or clause (which case is appropriate under the circumstances). For example, in a sentence such as:

عقد المدير اجتماعاً مع الموظفين.
 ‘aqad-a l-mudiir-u jtimaa^c-an ma^c-a l-muwaZZaf-iina.

The director held a meeting with the employees.

There are three nouns in this sentence: *al-mudiir-u* ‘director, manager,’ *ijtimaa^c-an* ‘meeting,’ and *al-muwaZZaf-iina* ‘the employees.’ Each noun is marked for its case role in the sentence.

The first noun, *mudiir*, belongs to the triptote declension or declension one and is marked for definiteness by means of the definite article. These facts provide information about the nature of the word itself. Its function in this particular sentence is as the subject of the verb ‘aqad-a ‘held,’ so this provides information about its syntactic role. Putting these pieces of information together, it is then possible to know that the case marker in this particular situation is *Damma*, which is the nominative marker for definite triptotes.

The second noun, *ijtimaa^c*, also belongs to the triptote declension or declension one, and is marked for indefiniteness by nunation affixed at the end of the word. The noun functions in this sentence as direct object of the verb ‘aqad-a ‘held,’ so this provides information about its syntactic role. Putting these pieces of information together, it is then possible to know that the case marker in this particular situation is *fatHataani*, accusative.

The third noun is *al-muwaZZaf-iina*. It is plural and definite, and it follows the semi-preposition *ma^c-a*. It is therefore in the genitive case. It has a sound masculine plural suffix, which places it in a declension that shows the case inflection by means of the long vowel before the *nuun* of the plural suffix (the *-ii* of *-iina*).

Therefore, case as a system is both morphological (word-related) and syntactic (sentence-related) and is a hybrid “morphosyntactic” category. Each of the three Arabic cases is presented here with its typical functions. These lists are by no means exhaustive, but they cover the majority of occurrences of these cases in MSA.

5.3.1 Nominative case (*al-rafc* الرفع, *al-marfuu* المرفوع)

The nominative inflection (typically -u or -un, -uuna in the sound masculine plural suffix, or -aani in the dual suffix) has five key functions.⁵⁵ It marks the subject of a verbal sentence, the subject and predicate of equational sentences, certain locative adverbs, the vocative, and citation forms.

5.3.1.1 THE SUBJECT (*al-faa'il* الفاعل) OF A VERBAL SENTENCE (*jumla fi'liyya* جملة فعلية):

The subject of the verb is nominative because it forms, along with the verb, a structural unit, termed *jumla* جملة. This unit can stand independently of any other units and conveys a predication.

اتَّفَقَ الوُزَرَاءُ عَلَى تَعْزِيزِ التَّعَاوُنِ.
ittafaq-a l-wuzaraa'-u 'alaa ta'ziiz-i l-ta'aawun-i.

The ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation.

عَقَدَ الْجَانِبَانِ مَبَاحِثَاتٍ رَسْمِيَّةً.
'aqad-a l-jaanib-aani mubaaHathaat-in rasmiyyat-an.

The two sides held official discussions.

تَرَكَهُ الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَرَاءَهُمْ.
tarak-a-hu l-muslim-uuna waraa'-a-hum.

The Muslims left it behind them.

وُلِدَ النَّبِيُّ مُحَمَّدٌ فِي مَكَّةَ.
*wulid-a l-nabiyy-u muHammad-un fii makkat-a.*⁵⁶

The Prophet Muhammad was born in Mecca.

5.3.1.2 THE SUBJECT (*al-mubtada'* المبتدأ) AND PREDICATE (*al-xabar* الخبر) OF AN EQUATIONAL SENTENCE (*jumla 'ismiyya* جملة اسمية):⁵⁷

المَعْلُومَاتُ خَاطِئَةٌ. <i>al-ma'luumaat-u xaaTi'at-un.</i>	قَصْرُ الْمَلِكِ ضَخْمٌ. <i>qaSr-u l-malik-i Daxm-un.</i>
--	--

The information is wrong.

The palace of the king [is] huge.

⁵⁵ In addition, the nominative case marking for defective nouns and adjectives fuses with the genitive (-in/ for indefinite, -ii/ for definite); for indeclinable nouns and adjectives it is realized as -an/ or -aa/, and for invariable nouns and adjectives, the nominative appears the same as all other cases; -aa/. See the paradigms for declensions six, seven, and eight, 5.4.3–5.4.5.

⁵⁶ The subject of an Arabic sentence with a passive verb, such as this one, is referred to as the *naa'ib al-faa'il* 'the deputy subject.' See Chapter 38 for the use of the passive.

⁵⁷ The term for "subject" of an Arabic sentence differs depending on whether or not the sentence contains a verb. The subject of a verbal sentence (*al-faa'il*) is seen as the agent or doer of the action; the subject of an equational sentence (*al-mubtada'*) is the topic of a verbless predication. For more on equational sentence structure, see Chapter 4, section 2.1ff.

الدفع مسبقاً.

al-daf^c-u musabbaq-un.

Payment [is] in advance.

المهم هو العودة.

al-muhimm-u huwa l-^cawdat-u

The important thing [is] to return.

5.3.1.3 CERTAIN ADVERBS: A few adverbs retain a *Damma* (non-nunated) in many syntactic functions, even when they are preceded by a preposition. It has been hypothesized that this adverbial marker is a fossilized remnant of a locative case in previous stages of language development.⁵⁸ Certain function words, like *mundh-u* and *Hayth-u* have *Damma* consistently. Other words, such as *qabl-u* and *ba^cd-u* have the *Damma* ending when they are used as independent adverbs, but not when used as prepositions followed by a noun or a pronoun (where they normally have *fatHa*).

since; ago	<i>mundh-u</i>	منذ	only	<i>Hasb-u; fa-Hasb-u</i>	حسب
where; whereas	<i>Hayth-u</i>	حيث	yet	<i>ba^cd-u</i>	بعد
at all	<i>qaTT-u</i>	قط	before	<i>qabl-u; min qabl-u</i>	قبل؛ من قبل

وسّع الأمريكيون الفارق منذ البداية.

wassa^c-a l-^aamriikiyy-uuna l-faariq-a mundh-u l-bidaayat-i.

The Americans widened the margin [of points] from the beginning.

في مستشفى حيث تقع قصص حب

fii mustashfan Hayth-u ta-qa^c-u qiSaS-u Hubb-in

in a hospital where love stories happen

لم تكشف هويتهم بعد.

lam tu-kshaf huwiyyaat-u-hum ba^cd-u.

Their identities have not yet been revealed.

5.3.1.4 THE VOCATIVE (*al-nidaa'* النداء), where someone or some entity is addressed directly by the speaker. The nominative (without nunation) is used on the vocative noun unless that noun is the first term of an *'iDaafa* construction, in which case it shifts to accusative.⁵⁹

يا رشيد

*yaa rashiid-u!*⁶⁰

O Rashid!

أيها السيدات والسادة

'ayyuhaa l-sayyidaat-u wa-l-saadat-u!

Ladies and gentlemen!

⁵⁸ See Fleisch 1961, I:280 and 1979, II:465-66 about the Semitic "adverbial case" with /-u/ suffix. For more on this see Chapter 11, section 4.1.3.

⁵⁹ See section 5.3.3.12 subsection (3) of this chapter for examples of the first terms of *'iDaafa* in the accusative after the vocative particle.

⁶⁰ If the vocative particle *yaa* ('O') is used, the following word has *Damma*, but not nunation or the definite article. If the vocative particle is *'ayyu-haa* (m.) or *'ayyatu-haa* (f.), the following word or words have the definite article.

Certain exclamations fall into this category:⁶¹

O goodness! ('O peace!)	yaa <i>salaam-u!</i>	يا سلام!
What a loss! What a pity!	yaa <i>xasaarat-u!</i>	يا خسارة!

5.3.1.5 THE CITATION FORM of nouns and adjectives in lists or lexicons, although they may also be cited without desinence, in “bare” form. This function of the nominative — as the default case marker for substantives in isolation, is in line with usage in other languages.⁶² For example, a list of vocabulary words out of context:

monarch	‘aahil-un	عاهل
forbidden	mamnuu‘-un	ممنوع
treaty	mu‘aahadat-un	معاهدة
The Sudan	al-suudaan-u	السودان
The Fertile Crescent	al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u	الهلال الخصيب

5.3.2 Genitive case (*al-jarr* الجرّ, *al-majruur* المجرور; *al-xafD* الخفض):

The genitive inflection (-i or -in, -a [in diptote declensions], -iina [for the sound masculine plural] or -ayni [in the dual]) has three chief functions. It marks:

5.3.2.1 THE OBJECT OF A PREPOSITION: Prepositions are followed by nouns or noun phrases in the genitive case.

في الظلام <i>fii l-Zalaam-i</i> in the shade	إلى اليمين <i>‘ilaa l-yamiin-i</i> to the right
من بيروت <i>min bayruut-a</i> from Beirut	كجسر حضاري <i>ka-jisr-in HaDaariyy-in</i> as a cultural bridge
من الممالك المصرية <i>min-a l-mamaaliik-i l-miSriyy-iina</i> from the Egyptian Mamelukes	في هذين الكتابين <i>fii haadh-ayni l-kitaab-ayni</i> in these two books

⁶¹ Note that exclamations with yaa may also use the preposition li- ‘for’ + a definite noun in the genitive case:

O the poor man!	yaa li-l-maskiin-i!	يا للمسكين!
How unfortunate!	yaa li-l-‘asaf-i!	يا للأسف!

⁶² Blake notes (1994, 31) that in Greek (and other languages as well) the nominative “is the case used outside constructions, the case used in isolation, the case used in naming.” He further states the proposition that (1994, 32) “the nominative simply delineates an entity not a relation between an entity and a predicate.” See, for example, the Arabic vocabulary lists in Abboud and McCarus 1983.

5.3.2.2 THE OBJECT OF A LOCATIVE ADVERB (Zarf makaan wa-Zarf zamaan ظرف مكان ووظرف زمان): Arabic locative adverbs function very much like prepositions. They are different from true prepositions in that they are derived from trilateral lexical roots and can also themselves be objects of prepositions. See section 5.3.3.2 following, and Chapter 16, section 3 on “semi-prepositions.”

قبل أيام	تحت نور الشمس
<i>qabl-a 'ayyaam-in</i>	<i>taHt-a nuur-i l-shams-i</i>
[a few] days ago	under the sunlight

5.3.2.3 THE SECOND TERM OF AN ³ iDaafa CONSTRUCTION: The second term of the annexation structure or ³iDaafa construction is normally a noun in the genitive case.

كيس فستق	غرفة التجارة	لغة المثقفين
<i>kiiis-u fustuq-in</i>	<i>ghurfat-u l-tijaaarat-i</i>	<i>lughat-u l-muthaqqaf-iina</i>
a bag of nuts	the chamber of commerce	the language of cultivated [people]

مدير المؤسسة	مدينة بغداد
<i>mudiir-u l-mu'assasat-i</i>	<i>madiinat-u baghdaad-a</i>
the director of the establishment	the city of Baghdad

5.3.3 Accusative case (*al-naSb* النصب; *al-manSuub* المنصوب)

The accusative inflection (*-a, -an, -in, -i, -iina* [in the sound masculine plural] or *-ayni* [in the dual]) has the most functions in Arabic because it not only marks nouns, adjectives, and noun phrases in a wide range of constructions, but it also marks adverbial expressions.⁶³ In MSA, it frequently occurs in the following constructions:

5.3.3.1 THE OBJECT OF A TRANSITIVE VERB (*al-maf'uul bi-hi* المفعول به): A transitive verb is one which, in addition to having a subject or agent which accomplishes the action, also has an object or entity that is affected by the action. The object of the verb in Arabic is in the accusative case.⁶⁴

حضروا اللقاء.	لا تشعل نارا.
<i>HaDar-uu l-liqaa'-a.</i>	<i>laa tu-sh'il naar-an.</i>
They attended the meeting.	Don't ignite a fire.

⁶³ See Wright 1967, 2:45–129 for further discussion of the accusative in Classical Arabic.

⁶⁴ Blake, in his discussion of case roles in general, states (1994, 134): “The accusative is the case that encodes the direct object of a verb.”

تعلم كلمات معدودة فقط.

ta'allam-a kalimaat-in ma'duudat-an faqaT.

He learned a limited number of **words** only.

5.3.3.2 LOCATIVE ADVERBS OF BOTH TIME AND PLACE (*Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan* ظروف مكان وظروف زمان): These adverbs are usually in the accusative but may be made genitive if they follow a preposition.⁶⁵ They function in ways similar to prepositions, describing location or direction, and are followed by a noun in the genitive case. For that reason they are referred to in this work as semi-prepositions.⁶⁶ For a more extensive description and examples of prepositions and semi-prepositions see Chapter 16 section 3.

قبل سنة

qabl-a sanat-in

a year ago

عبر قارتين

'abr-a qaarrat-ayni

across two continents

داخل الدولة الإسلامية

daaxil-a l-dawlat-i l-'islaamiyyat-i

inside the Islamic state

عند إلقاء القبض

'ind-a 'ilqaa'-i l-qabD-i

at the time of arrest

5.3.3.3 ADVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS OF TIME, PLACE, AND MANNER (*al-maf'uul fii-hi* المفعول فيه): The accusative case functions extensively in MSA to indicate the circumstances under which an action takes place.⁶⁷ In this function, the accusative can be used on nouns or adjectives. If the noun or adjective is by itself, it is normally in the indefinite accusative; if it is the first term of an ⁱDaafa, it does not have nunation.

تستمر يوماً واحداً.

ta-stamirr-u yawm-an waaHid-an.

It lasts **one day**.

جاءوا فجر يوم الاقتراع.

jaa'-uu fajr-a yawm-i l-iqtiraa'-i.

They came **at dawn** on the day
of balloting.

حصلتُ حديثاً على الجنسية.

HaSal-tu Hadiith-an 'alaa

l-jinsiyyat-i.

I **recently** obtained citizenship.

اللجنة ستعقد اجتماعين سنوياً.

al-lajnat-u sa-ta-'qud-u jtimaat-ayni

sanawiyy-an.

The committee will hold two
meetings annually.

⁶⁵ They seem to fall into the category of “relator nouns” described by Blake: “Relator nouns are a specialised subclass of nouns that behave like adpositions (prepositions)” (1994, 205).

⁶⁶ Wright states: “Many words, which are obviously substantives in the accusative of place . . . may be conveniently regarded in a certain sense as prepositions” (1967, II:178).

⁶⁷ Blake (1994, 182) notes that in a number of languages, “it is common for nouns in oblique cases to be reinterpreted as adverbs, particularly adverbs of place, time and manner.”

سيعود قريباً إلى بغداد.
 sa-ya^cuud-u qariib-an ^oilaa
 baghdaad-a.

He will return to Baghdad soon.

مدة ثمانى ساعات ليل الخميس
 muddat-a thamaanii saa^caat-in
 layl-a l-xamiis-i
 [for] a period of eight hours on
 Thursday night

5.3.3.4 THE INTERNAL OBJECT OR COGNATE ACCUSATIVE STRUCTURE (*al-maf^cuul al-muTlaq* المفعول المطلق). In this structure, the action denoted is intensified through use of a verbal noun cognate with the verb (i.e., derived from the same root; usually from the same derivational form (I-X)). Often the verbal noun is modified by an adjective, also in the accusative:

حلّت الموضوعَ حلاً جذرياً.
 Hall-at-i l-mawDuu^c-a Hall-an jidhriyy-an.

It solved the issue fundamentally.

تدرّكه عمّان إدراكاً كلياً.
 tu-drik-u-hu ^cammaan-u ^oidraak-an kulliyy-an.
 Amman realizes it fully.

ساهما مساهمةً فعالةً.
 saaham-aa musaahamat-an fa^c-aalat-an.
 They (two) participated effectively.

5.3.3.5 THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCUSATIVE (*al-Haal* الحال). Expressing a condition or circumstance that occurs concurrent with or ongoing at the time of the action of the main verb, a participle is often used to describe that condition (*al-Haal*). The participle agrees with the noun it modifies in number and gender, but is in the accusative case and usually indefinite. The active participle is widely used in this function, but occasionally the passive participle or a verbal noun is used. For more on this topic see Chapter 11, section 2.3.1.

(1) Using active participles:

دخل الصفّ متأخراً. daxal-a l-Saff-a muta ^c axxir-an.	رفع يده معترضاً. rafa ^c -a yad-a-hu mu ^c tariD-an.
He entered the classroom late.	He raised his hand objecting.

يغادرون القاهرة اليوم متوجّهين إلى باريس.
 yu-ghaadir-uuna l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a mutawajjih-iina ^oilaa baariis.
 They are leaving Cairo today heading for Paris.

ألقى الوزيرُ كلمةً ناقلاً تحياتَ الرئيسِ.

ʿalqaa l-waziir-u kalimat-an naaqil-an taHiyyaat-i l-raʿiis-i.

The minister gave a speech **transmitting** the greetings of the president.

(2) Using passive participles:

قفزت مذعورةً.

qafaz-at madhʿuurat-an.

She jumped, **frightened**.

(3) Using a verbal noun:

وقالَ ردّاً على سؤالٍ...

wa-qaal-a radd-an ʿalaa suʿaal-in...

(And) he said, **replying** to a question...

5.3.3.6 THE ACCUSATIVE OF PURPOSE (*al-mafʿuul li-ʿajl-i-hi* المفعول لأجله) OR (*al-mafʿuul la-hu* له المفعول) in order to show the motive, purpose, or reason for an action. It is usually used with an indefinite verbal noun.

القواتُ تشنُّ حملةً بحثاً عن أسلحةٍ.

al-quwwaat-u ta-shunn-u Hamlat-an baHth-an ʿan ʿasliHat-in.

The forces are launching a campaign **searching** for weapons.

خلالَ حفلةٍ استقبالٍ أقاموها تكريماً له.

xilaal-a Haflat-i stiqaal-in ʿaqaam-uu-haa takriim-an la-hu

during a reception they gave **in his honor**

شهدتْ مختلفُ المدنِ إضراباً واسعاً تضامناً مع العمالِ.

shahad-at muxtalif-u l-mudun-i ʿiDraab-an waasiʿ-an taDaamun-an maʿ-a l-ʿummaal-i.

Various cities witnessed a widespread strike **in solidarity** with the workers.

5.3.3.7 THE ACCUSATIVE OF SPECIFICATION (*al-tamyiiz* التمييز). This accusative is used on nouns in order to delimit and specify the application of a statement. It usually answers the question, "In what way?" It includes comparative and superlative expressions as well as counted nouns between 11 and 99, which are accusative and singular.

نعلنُ ذاكَ قولاً وفِعْلاً.

nu-ʿlin-u dhaaka qawl-an wa-fiʿl-an.

We announce that **in speech and in action**.

كَانَتْ أَكْبَرَ عَاصِمَةٍ جَاهاً وَفَخَامَةً.

kaan-at 'akbar-a 'aaSimat-in jaah-an wa-faxaamat-an.

It was the greatest capital in fame and splendor.

فَقَدْ بَدَأَ أَكْثَرَ حَذَرًا وَدِبْلُومَاسِيَّةً.

fa-qad badaa 'akthar-a Hidhr-an wa-dibluumaasiyyat-an.

It seemed more cautious and diplomatic ('greater in caution and diplomacy').

فِي عَشْرِينَ مَجْلَدًا

fii 'ishriina mujjallad-an

in twenty volumes⁶⁸

عَلَى مَدَى خَمْسَةِ عَشَرَ عَامًا

'alaa madaa xamsat-a 'ashr-a 'aam-an

for fifteen years

بِمُشَارَكَةِ ثَلَاثِينَ بَاحِثًا.

bi-mushaarakat-i thalaathiina baaHith-an

with the participation of thirty researchers

5.3.3.8 THE *nawaasix* النواسخ: CONVERTERS TO ACCUSATIVE.⁶⁹ Arabic grammar has a special category for words (verbs and particles) that shift one or more elements of a clause into the accusative case. There are three groups of these, each of which is composed of a typical word and what are termed its "sisters": *kaan-a* and its sisters, *'inna* and its sisters, and *Zann-a* and its sisters.⁷⁰

- (1) *kaan-a* and its "sisters" (*kaan-a wa-'axawaat-u-haa* **كَانَ وَأَخَوَاتُهَا**)⁷¹ This set of verbs has the effect of shifting the predicate (*xabar*) of an equational sentence from the nominative case to the accusative case. According to Hasan (1987, I:545) there are thirteen of these verbs, the most common in MSA are:

<i>lays-a</i>	to not be ⁷²	لَيْسَ
<i>Saar-a</i>	to become	صَارَ
<i>baat-a</i>	to become	بَاتَ
<i>'aSbaH-a</i>	to become	أَصْبَحَ
<i>Zall-a</i>	to remain	ظَلَّ

⁶⁸ See Chapter 15 for further discussion of numerals and counting.

⁶⁹ "The *al-nawaasikh* group of words in Arabic is defined by the Arab grammarians according to formal criteria; specifically, the role played by these words in inflection. Thus, words classified as belonging to the *al-nawaasikh* category have the effect of inducing one or two elements of the nuclear sentence to 'fall' from the nominative to the accusative case" (Anghelescu 1999, 131).

⁷⁰ Hasan 1987, 1:543ff. and 630ff. has thorough descriptions of the *nawaasix* category in Arabic.

⁷¹ See also Chapter 36 in this book.

⁷² In addition to the verb *lays-a* there are certain negative particles that have similar meanings and effects, including *maa* and *laa*. See Hasan 1987 1:593ff. for more on these particles.

<i>baqiy-a</i>	to remain, to stay	بقي
<i>daama</i> and <i>maa daama</i>	to continue to be	دام + ما دام
<i>maa zaal-a</i>	to continue to be; to still be; to not cease to be	ما زال
<i>ʔamsaa</i>	to become	أمسى

These verbs all denote existential states of being (or not being), becoming, and remaining. They take accusative complements. That is, the predicate of the underlying equational predication is accusative.

مؤلف الكتاب ليس مؤرخاً. <i>muʔallif-u l-kitaab-i lays-a muʔarrix-an.</i>	ليس جذاباً جداً. <i>lays-a jadhdhaab-an jidd-an.</i>
The author of the book is not a historian.	It is not very attractive.

كان جزءاً من هذا الحلم. <i>kaan-a juzʔ-an min haadhaa l-Hulm-i.</i>	أصبح همهم اليومي. <i>ʔaSbaH-a hamm-a-hum-u l-yawmiyy-a.</i>
It was a part of this dream.	It became their daily concern.

كانت أكبر عاصمة أوروبية. <i>kaan-at ʔakbar-a ʔaaSimat-in ʔuurubbiyyat-in.</i>
It was the largest European capital.

الصناعة الشعبية ما زالت حية. <i>al-Sinaaʔat-u l-shaʔbiyyat-u maa zaal-at Hayyat-an.</i>
Folk handicraft is still alive.

(2) *ʔinna* and her sisters (*ʔinna wa-ʔaxawaat-u-haa* وإن وأخواتها):

<i>ʔinna</i>	‘verily; indeed; that’	إنّ
<i>ʔanna</i>	‘that’	أنّ
<i>laakinna</i>	‘but’	لكنّ
<i>li-ʔanna</i>	‘because’	لأنّ
<i>laʔalla</i>	‘perhaps’	لعلّ

These particles are subordinating conjunctions which require that the subject of the subordinate clause (also called the complement clause) be in the accusative case.⁷³

⁷³ For more on *ʔinna* and her sisters, see Chapter 19 on subordinating conjunctions.

قالت إنَّ أحداً لا يستطيعُ أنْ يوقفهم.

qaal-a 'inna 'aHad-an laa ya-staTii'-u 'an yu-waqqif-a-hum.

It said that no one could stop them.

أنَّ الزراعةَ لغةٌ عالميّةٌ

'anna l-ziraa'at-a lughat-un 'aalamiyyat-un

that agriculture is a world language

لكنَّ قليلين من الباحثين

laakinna qaliil-iina min-a l-baaHith-iina

but few of the researchers

لأنَّ السنتينِ الأخيرتينِ كانتا من أفضلِ السنواتِ

li-'anna l-sanat-ayni l-'axiirat-ayni kaan-ataa min 'afDal-i l-sanawaat-i

because the last two years were among the best years

- (3) *Zann-a* and her sisters (*Zanna wa-'axawaat-u-haa* وظن وأخواتها): The verb *Zann-a* 'to suppose, believe' is another one of the *nawaasix*. It has the effect of making both the subject and the predicate of an equational clause accusative.⁷⁴ This category includes verbs of "certainty and doubt" (Angelescu 1999, 132). Hasan breaks this category down into two parts: *'af'aal al-quluub*⁷⁵ أفعال القلوب or *'af'aal qalbiyya* أفعال قلبية (verbs of perception or cognition) and *'af'aal al-taHwiil* أفعال التحويل (verbs of transformation).⁷⁶ Hasan gives complete lists; here are some examples.⁷⁷

(3.1) Verbs of perception:

to suppose, believe *Zann-a* ظنَّ

أظنُّ زيداً ذاهباً.

'a-Zunn-u Zayd-an dhaahib-an.

I believe Zayd [is] going.⁷⁸

to consider, deem	'add-a	عدَّ	to perceive, deem, see	ra'aa	رأى
to find, deem	wajad-a	وجد	to consider	i'tabar-a ⁷⁹	اعتبر

⁷⁴ One of these accusatives may take the form of an object pronoun suffix on the verb.

⁷⁵ Which Hasan explains as having to do with psychological perceptions: in particular, emotions and intellect (1987, II:4, note 4).

⁷⁶ As explained by Hasan, verbs that have to do with transformation of something from one state to another (Ibid., note 5).

⁷⁷ See especially Hasan's chart of *Zann-a* and her sisters (1987, II:10). Note also the discussion in Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 34–36.

⁷⁸ Example from Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 34.

⁷⁹ The verb *i'tabar-a* 'to consider' is not included in older lists of *'af'aal al-quluub*, but that is likely due to the fact that its usage is more modern and recent rather than traditional. Its meaning and its effect on the sentence components show that it is certainly a member of this category. I thank my colleague Amin Bonnah for this insight.

اعتبروا هذه الخطوة إنجازاً تاريخياً كبيراً.

i[°]tabar-uu haadhihi l-xuTwat-a [°]injaaz-an taariixiy-an kabiir-an.

They considered this step a great historical accomplishment.

ونعتبر مكتبة المركز مهمة.

wa-na-[°]tabir-u maktabat-a l-markaz-i muhimmat-an.

We consider the library of the center important.

ما يراه البعض إيجابيات يراه البعض الآخر سلبيات.

maa ya-raa-hu l-ba[°]D-u [°]iijaabiyyaat-in ya-raa-hu l-ba[°]D-u l-[°]aaxar-u salbiyyaat-in.

What some see [as] positives others see [as] negatives.

- (3.2) **Verbs of transformation:** These verbs signify changing a thing into something else, changing its state or appearance, or designating one thing as something else.

to convert *Sayyar-a* صير to take, adopt (as) *ittaxadh-a* اتخذ

to make *ja[°]al-a* جعل to leave *tarak-a* ترك

واتخذوا النهر حدوداً للمنطقة.

wa-ttaxadh-uu l-nahr-a Hudud-an li-l-mantiqat-i.

They took the river [as] borders of the region.

ترك الباب مفتوحاً.

tarak-a l-baab-a maftuuH-an.

He left the door open.

- 5.3.3.9 THE NOUN FOLLOWING THE *laa* OF ABSOLUTE OR CATEGORICAL NEGATION** (*laa l-naafiyat-u lil-jins-i* لا النافية للجنس)⁸⁰ In this construction the noun is devoid of the definite article or nunation. It carries only the accusative marker *fatHa*.

لا شكرَ على واجب.

laa shukr-a [°]alaa waajib-in.

Don't mention it.

('There is no thanking for a duty.')

لا شكَّ في ذلك.

laa shakk-a fii dhaalika.

There's no doubt about that.

لا مبررَ لإلغائها.

laa mubarrir-a li-[°]ilghaa[°]-i-haa.

There is no excuse for its elimination.

لا مانعَ من دفع بعض الزيادة.

laa maani[°]-a min daf[°]-i ba[°]D-i l-ziyaadat-i.

There's no objection to paying
a bit more.

⁸⁰ See also Chapter 37, section 2.1.6.

من دونهم لا استقرار ولا سلام في المنطقة.

min duun-i-him laa stiqlaar-a wa laa salaam-a fii l-minTaqaat-i.

Without them there is no **stability** and no **peace** in the region.

5.3.3.10 THE TEENS NUMBERS, both cardinal and ordinal, including eleven.⁸¹ No matter what their function in a sentence, these compound numbers always have both parts marked with *fatHa*:

ثمنه خمسة عشر درهماً.

thaman-u-hu xamsat-a ‘ashar-a dirham-an.

Its cost is **fifteen** dirhams.

في الغرف التسع عشرة

fii l-ghuraf-i l-tis‘-a ‘asharat-a

in the **nineteen** rooms

يبلغ طوله ثلاثة عشر متراً.

ya-blugh-u Tuul-u-hu thalaathat-a ‘ashar-a mitr-an.

Its length reaches **thirteen** meters.

5.3.3.11 AS THE COMPLEMENT OF VERBS OF “SEEMING”: Verbs that denote appearing or seeming also take accusative complements.

كان يبدو شخصية بارزة في مجتمعه.

kaan-a ya-bduu shaxsiyyat-an baarizat-an fii mujtama‘-i-hi.

He had seemed [like] a **prominent personality** in his society.

تبدو أصغر بكثير من عمرها.

ta-bduu ‘aSghar-a bi-kathiir-in min ‘umr-i-haa.

She appears much **younger** than her age.

يبدو عتيقاً جداً.

ya-bduu ‘atiiq-an jidd-an.

It looks very **ancient**.

5.3.3.12 LESS FREQUENT ACCUSATIVES: Further instances of the use of the accusative case in MSA are noted in most teaching texts and traditional grammars, but few or none appeared in the corpus of text studied for this book. Some of the most important include:

- (1) **kam + accusative singular noun:** A singular accusative, indefinite noun is used after the question word *kam* ‘how much, how many?’

كم فصلاً قرأت؟

kam faSl-an qara‘-ti?

How many **chapters** did you

(f.) read?

كم غرفة في الفندق؟

kam ghurfat-an fii l-funduq-i?

How many **rooms** [are there] in

the hotel?

⁸¹ The only exception to this is the cardinal numeral “twelve” which occurs in both the nominative and the genitive/accusative cases. See Chapter 15 on numerals and numerical expressions.

- (2) **Exclamation of astonishment:** *maa 'af^cal-a!* ما أفعل! (*maa l-ta^cajjub* (ما التعجب): The accusative is used in the 'adjectival verb' construction on the noun following the exclamation of wonder, astonishment or surprise *maa 'af^cal-a!* In this expression, the word *maa* is followed by "an elative in the accusative of exclamation," (Cantarino, 1974, II:210), and then a noun in the accusative case. Note that this form of the elative is identical with a Form IV verb, and that it is described this way in some texts and called *fi^cl al-ta^cajjub*.⁸²

ما أجمل المنظر!
maa 'ajmal-a l-manZar-a!
 How lovely the view is!

The noun may be replaced by a pronoun suffix:

ما أجملهُ!
maa 'ajmal-a-hu!
 How lovely it is!⁸³

- (3) **Vocative first term of construct:** The accusative case is used with the vocative particles *yaa* or *'ayy-u-haa* if the addressee is the first term of an *'iDaafa* or noun construct, or if the noun has a pronoun suffix:

يا عبد الله!	يا أرض بلادي!
<i>yaa 'abd-a llaah-i!</i>	<i>yaa 'arD-a bilaad-ii!</i>
O Abdallah! (lit: 'servant of God')	O, earth of my country!

يا طلاب الجامعة وأساتذتها!
yaa Tullaab-a l-jaami^cat-i wa-'asaatidhat-a-haa!
 O students and professors of the university!

Even without the vocative particle, a noun in construct or with a pronoun suffix, understood as the addressee, is put into the accusative:

أبانا الذي في السموات ...
'ab-aa-naa lladhii fii l-samawaat-i ...
 Our Father who [art] in heaven ...

- (4) **Nouns following exceptive expressions (*al-istithnaa* 'الاستثناء) in non-negative clauses:** In clauses using an exceptive expression such as *maa 'adaa*, or

⁸² See Abboud and McCarus 1976, Part 2:272. See also Cowan 1964, 177. In this book, see Chapter 25 on the Form IV verb, section 9.

⁸³ For more examples see Cantarino 1974, II, 210–13.

^ʔ*illaa*, the noun following the exceptive is in the accusative case if the clause does not contain a negative.

حضر الجميعُ إلا رشيداً.

HaDar-a l-jamii^ʕ-u^ʔ illaa rashiid-an.

Everyone came **except** Rashid.

تكلّمتُ مع كلِّ الطالباتِ إلا ياسمينَ.

takallam-tu ma^ʕa kull-i l-Taalibaat-i^ʔ illaa yaasamiin-a.

I spoke with all the [female] students **except** Yasmine.

This is the case in particular with time-telling, where the word ^ʔ*illaa* is used to express how many minutes are lacking until a particular hour, e.g.:

الساعةُ الخامسةُ إلا ربعاً.

al-saa^ʕ-at-u l-xaamisat-u^ʔ illaa rub^ʕ-an.

It is 4:45 ('five [o'clock] **less** a **quarter** [of an hour]').

الساعةُ السابعةُ إلا ثلثاً.

al-saa^ʕ-at-u l-saabi^ʕ-at-u^ʔ illaa thulth-an.

It is 6:40 ('seven [o'clock] **less** a **third** [of an hour]').

5.3.3.13 OTHER ACCUSATIVES: The accusative case is used in other constructions besides the ones mentioned, but these are infrequent in MSA. For more extensive discussion and listings, especially for literary and classical syntax, see Cantarino 1975, II:161–248; Wright 1967, II:44–129 and in Arabic, Hasan 1987, II:3–430.

5.4 Arabic declensions

Following the practice of Wright (1967, I:234 ff.) and Cowan (1964, 29ff.), this book refers to the various inflectional classes of substantives as “declensions.” A declension is a class of substantives (nouns or adjectives) that exhibits similar inflectional markings for case and definiteness. Arabic nouns and adjectives fall into eight declensions:⁸⁴

- 1 three-way inflection (called “triptote” in many Arabic grammars)
- 2 dual

⁸⁴ Note that Wright refers to declensions of “undefined” or “defined” nouns, referring to triptote nouns as the first declension (236) and diptote nouns as the second declension (239). He does not list other inflectional classes as declensions. Cowan (29) states that “there are three declensions in Arabic” allotting the first declension to triptotes, the second declension to diptotes and the third to the uninflectable and undeclinable substantives (32).

For ease of reference in this book, I have allotted declensional status not only to singular and broken plural noun stems, but also to words that incorporate suffixes denoting dual and plural number, since they inflect for case and definiteness in different ways.

- 3 sound feminine plural
- 4 sound masculine plural
- 5 diptote
- 6 defective
- 7 uninflectable (for case, but they show inflection for definiteness), and
- 8 invariable.

5.4.1 Three-way inflection: Triptote (*muʿrab* معرب)

The triptote is the base category or declension one for Arabic nouns and adjectives.⁸⁵ The term “triptote” refers to words (nouns and adjectives) that take all three short vowel case endings, each one differentiating a particular case (*Damma*, *kasra* and *fatHa*). The triptote declension also allows nouns and adjectives to be marked for indefiniteness with nunation.⁸⁶ This is considered the base or complete declension because it shows the full range of inflectional markers for all three cases.⁸⁷

5.4.1.1 THE CASE MARKERS:

- (1) **Nominative:** The nominative suffix in the triptote declension is *Damma* by itself ^{◌u} (-u) for definite words or two *Dammas*/*Damma* with a tail ^{◌un} or ^{◌n} (-u-n) for indefinite words. Examples:

(1.1) Noun in the nominative case:

the honor/an honor	<i>al-sharaf-u/sharaf-un</i>	الشرف / شرف
the secret/a secret	<i>al-sirr-u/sirr-un</i>	السِرُّ / سر
the ship/a ship	<i>al-safiinat-u/safiinat-un</i>	السفينة / سفينة

(1.2) Adjective in the nominative case:

short (def.)/short (indef.)	<i>al-qaSiir-u/qaSiir-un</i>	القَصِيرُ / قصير
new (def.)/new (indef.)	<i>al-jadiid-u/jadiid-un</i>	الجَدِيدُ / جديد

- (2) **Genitive:** The genitive marker in the triptote declension is *kasra* by itself (-i) _◌ for definite words or two *kasras* (-i-n) _◌ for indefinite words. Note that when *kasra* is written together with *shadda*, it may be written either below the consonant or below the *shadda*.

⁸⁵ The term *muʿrab* means ‘fully inflectable.’

⁸⁶ For more on nunation, see section 4.2 in this chapter.

⁸⁷ Certain linguists have designated these cases differently in English. Beeston (1970, 51), for example, refers to the cases as “independent status (nominative),” “dependent status (genitive),” and “subordinate status (accusative).” See his Chapter 7 (“Syntactic markers of nouns”) for a brief but comprehensive description of Arabic case marking.

(2.1) Noun in the genitive case:

the honor/an honor	<i>al-sharaf-i/sharaf-in</i>	الشرف / شرفٍ
the secret/a secret	<i>al-sirr-i/sirr-in</i>	السِّرُّ / سرٍّ
the ship/a ship	<i>al-safiinat-i/safiinat-in</i>	السفينة / سفينةٍ

(2.2) Adjective in the genitive case:

short (def.)/short (indef.)	<i>al-qaSiir-i/qaSiir-in</i>	القصير / قصيرٍ
new (def.)/new (indef.)	<i>al-jadiid-i/jadiid-in</i>	الجديد / جديدٍ

- (3) **Accusative:** The accusative marker in the triptote declension is *fatHa* by itself (*-a*) for definite words or two *fatHas* to signal nunation (*-a-n*) for indefinite words. With the accusative form of nunation, a supporting *ʿalif* is used, except with words ending in *taaʾ marbuuTa* or in a *hamza* preceded by *ʿalif*. This support *ʿalif* is visible in writing, but it is not pronounced; it is only a seat for the two *fatHas*.

(3.1) Noun in the accusative case:

the honor/an honor	<i>al-sharaf-a/sharaf-an</i>	الشرف / شرفاً
the secret/a secret	<i>al-sirr-a/sirr-an</i>	السِّرَّ / سرّاً
the ship/a ship	<i>al-safiinat-a/safiinat-an</i>	السفينة / سفينةً
the winter/a winter	<i>al-shitaaʾ-a/shitaaʾ-an</i>	الشتاء / شتاءً

(3.2) Adjective in the accusative case:

short (def.)/short (indef.)	<i>al-qaSiir-a/qaSiir-an</i>	القصير / قصيراً
new (def.)/new (indef.)	<i>al-jadiid-a/jadiid-an</i>	الجديد / جديداً

5.4.1.2 DECLENSION ONE PARADIGMS:

(1) Singular masculine noun:

‘house’ بيت <i>bayt</i>				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-bayt-u</i>	الْبَيْتُ	<i>bayt-u-n</i>	بَيْتٌ
Genitive	<i>al-bayt-i</i>	الْبَيْتِ	<i>bayt-i-n</i>	بَيْتٍ
Accusative	<i>al-bayt-a</i>	الْبَيْتَ	<i>bayt-a-n</i>	بَيْتاً

(2) Plural noun:

'houses' <i>buyuut</i> بيوت				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-buyuut-u</i>	البيوتُ	<i>buyuut-u-n</i>	بيوتٌ
Genitive	<i>al-buyuut-i</i>	البيوتِ	<i>buyuut-i-n</i>	بيوتٍ
Accusative	<i>al-buyuut-a</i>	البيوتَ	<i>buyuut-a-n</i>	بيوتاً

(3) Feminine singular noun:

'ship' <i>safiina</i> سفينة				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-safiinat-u</i>	السفينةُ	<i>safiinat-u-n</i>	سفينةٌ
Genitive	<i>al-safiinat-i</i>	السفينةِ	<i>safiinat-i-n</i>	سفينةٍ
Accusative	<i>al-safiinat-a</i>	السفينةَ	<i>safiinat-a-n</i>	سفينةً

(4) Plural noun:

'ships' <i>sufun</i> سفن				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-sufun-u</i>	السفنُ	<i>sufun-u-n</i>	سفنٌ
Genitive	<i>al-sufun-i</i>	السفنِ	<i>sufun-i-n</i>	سفنٍ
Accusative	<i>al-sufun-a</i>	السفنَ	<i>sufun-a-n</i>	سفنأ

(5) Masculine singular adjective:

'short' <i>qaSiir</i> قصير				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-qaSiir-u</i>	القصيرُ	<i>qaSiir-un</i>	قصيرٌ
Genitive	<i>al-qaSiir-i</i>	القصيرِ	<i>qaSiir-in</i>	قصيرٍ
Accusative	<i>al-qaSiir-a</i>	القصيرَ	<i>qaSiir-an</i>	قصيراً

(6) Broken plural adjective:

‘short’ qiSaar قصار				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-qiSaar-u	الْقَصَارُ	qiSaar-un	قَصَارٌ
Genitive	al-qiSaar-i	الْقَصَارِ	qiSaar-in	قَصَارٍ
Accusative	al-qiSaar-a	الْقَصَارَ	qiSaar-an	قَصَارًا

5.4.1.3 THE FIVE NOUNS (al-’asmaa’ al-xamsa الأسماء الخمسة): Within the triptote declension there is a subset of Arabic nouns from biliteral or even monoliteral roots which show triptote case inflection in two ways: as a short vowel and as a long vowel. The long vowel is used when the word is used as the first term of a genitive construct (’iDaafa) or when it has a pronoun suffix.

The five nouns are:

father	’ab	أب	mouth	fam	فم
brother	’ax	أخ	possessor	dhuu	ذو
father-in-law	Ham	حم			

- (1) The five-noun paradigms: ‘father’ ’ab أب
- (1.1) As an independent word:

	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-’ab-u	الأبُ	’ab-u-n	أَبٌ
Genitive	al-’ab-i	الأبِ	’ab-i-n	أَبٍ
Accusative	al-’ab-a	الأبَ	’ab-an	أَبًا

- (1.2) With pronoun suffix: -haa ‘her father’:

Nominative	’ab-uu-haa	أَبُوهَا
Genitive	’ab-ii-haa	أَبِيهَا
Accusative	’ab-aa-haa	أَبَاهَا

(1.3) As first part of *ʿiDaafa*: ‘the father of Hasan’:

Nominative	<i>ʿab-uu Hasan-in</i>	أَبُو حَسَنِ
Genitive	<i>ʿab-ii Hasan-in</i>	أَبِي حَسَنِ
Accusative	<i>ʿab-aa Hasan-in</i>	أَبَا حَسَنِ

Examples:

أَصْبَحَ أَبًا.	الْأَبُ يُوسُفُ
<i>ʿaSbaH-a ʿab-an.</i>	<i>al-ʿab-u yuusuf-u</i>
He became a father.	Father Joseph
ذَهَبْتُ إِلَى بَيْتِ أَبِيهَا.	سَأَلْتُ أَخَاهُ.
<i>dhahab-at ʿilaa bayt-i ʿab-ii-haa.</i>	<i>saʿal-tu ʿax-aa-hu.</i>
She went to her father’s house.	I asked his brother.

5.4.2 Two-way inflection: declensions two, three, four, and five

Certain Arabic noun declensions exhibit only two different case markers, or two-way inflection. These declensions have a specific nominative inflectional marker but they merge the genitive and accusative into just one other inflectional marker.⁸⁸ Technically, these nouns are considered to exhibit all three cases; it is just that the genitive and accusative have exactly the same form.⁸⁹

The declensions that have two-way inflection fall into two major categories, the suffix declensions and the diptote declension. The suffix declensions are determined by number suffixes and include the dual, the sound masculine plural, and the sound feminine plural, whereas the diptote declension includes words that fall into particular semantic and morphological categories, as described below.

5.4.2.1 SUFFIX DECLENSIONS: THE DUAL (DECLENSION TWO), THE SOUND MASCULINE PLURAL (DECLENSION THREE) AND THE SOUND FEMININE PLURAL (DECLENSION FOUR). Three sets of two-way inflections are based on dual and plural suffixes rather than word stems. That is, once the suffix is attached to a word, it is the suffix itself that determines how the word will be marked for case. These number-marking suffixes in Arabic are all restricted to two case markings rather

⁸⁸ Sometimes, in this latter category, the combined genitive/accusative inflection is referred to as the “oblique” or essentially, non-nominative case marker.

⁸⁹ Traditional Arabic grammatical theory evolved the concept that all nouns are marked for every case, but that in some of them the case marker is “virtual” or “implied” (*muqaddar*) rather than overt (*Zaahir*).

than three. These suffixes carry two kinds of information: number (dual or plural) and case (nominative or genitive/accusative).

- (1) **Declension two: The dual (*al-muthannaa* المثنى)** As described in section 3.1 Arabic uses a suffix on the singular stem to mark the noun as being two in number, or in the dual. The dual suffix has two case forms, and is not inflected for definiteness.

-aani (nominative) -انِ
-ayni (genitive/accusative) -ينِ

(1.1) **Masculine dual noun:**

'two houses' bayt-aani بيتان				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-bayt-aani	البيتانِ	bayt-aani	بيتانِ
Genitive	al-bayt-ayni	البيتَيْنِ	bayt-ayni	بيتَيْنِ
Accusative	al-bayt-ayni	البيتَيْنِ	bayt-ayni	بيتَيْنِ

(1.2) **Feminine dual noun:**

'two cities' madiinat-aani مدينتان				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-madiinat-aani	المدينتانِ	madiinat-aani	مدينتانِ
Genitive	al-madiinat-ayni	المدينتينِ	madiinat-ayni	مدينتينِ
Accusative	al-madiinat-ayni	المدينتينِ	madiinat-ayni	مدينتينِ

(1.3) **Masculine dual adjective:**

'big' kabiir-aani كبيران				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-kabiir-aani	الكبيرانِ	kabiir-aani	كبيرانِ
Genitive	al-kabiir-ayni	الكبيرَيْنِ	kabiir-ayni	كبيرَيْنِ
Accusative	al-kabiir-ayni	الكبيرَيْنِ	kabiir-ayni	كبيرَيْنِ

(1.4) Feminine dual adjective:

'big' <i>kabiirat-aani</i> كَبِيرَتَانِ				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-kabiirat-aani</i>	الكَبِيرَتَانِ	<i>kabiirat-aani</i>	كَبِيرَتَانِ
Genitive	<i>al-kabiirat-ayni</i>	الكَبِيرَتَيْنِ	<i>kabiirat-ayni</i>	كَبِيرَتَيْنِ
Accusative	<i>al-kabiirat-ayni</i>	الكَبِيرَتَيْنِ	<i>kabiirat-ayni</i>	كَبِيرَتَيْنِ

Examples:

جرسان	من مركزين
<i>jaras-aani</i>	<i>min markaz-ayni</i>
two bells	from two centers
عاصفتان كبيرتان	في مدينتين كبيرتين
<i>'aaSifat-aani kabiirat-aani</i>	<i>fii madiinat-ayni kabiirat-ayni</i>
two big storms	in two big cities

(1.5) Nuun-deletion with possessive pronouns and as first term of construct:

When a dual noun is the first term of a construct, or if it has a pronoun suffix, the *nuun* of the dual suffix (and its short vowel *kasra*) is deleted.⁹⁰

بيديه	مع مرشحي الحزب
<i>bi-yad-ay-hi</i>	<i>ma^e-a murashshaH-ay-i l-Hizb-i</i>
in his two hands	with the two nominees of the party

وحضر اللقاء عميدا كليتي الطب والهندسة.
wa-HaDar-a l-liqaa²-a 'amiid-aa kulliyyat-ay-i l-Tibb-i wa-l-handasat-i.

The two deans of the schools of medicine and engineering attended the meeting.

(2) Declension three: The sound masculine plural (*jam^e mudhakkar saalim* (جمع مذكر سالم): The sound masculine plural has two forms, much like the

⁹⁰ The *nuun* of the dual can be considered a form of nunation, and since nunation cannot occur on a noun that is the first term of a genitive construct or on a noun with a suffixed possessive pronoun, the *nuun* of the dual suffix (and the sound masculine plural) is likewise deleted. The dual category is discussed at greater length in Chapter 15. Characteristics of the genitive construct, or *'iDaafa* are discussed in Chapter 8.

dual. Note that the long vowel in the suffix (-uu- or -ii-) is what changes when the case changes. The final short vowel (fatHa /-a/) remains the same in both the nominative and the genitive/accusative. This fatHa is not a case ending, but rather part of the spelling of the suffix. In pause form it is not pronounced.

Note: This form of plural is used only to refer to human beings.

correspondents (nominative)	muraasil-uuna	مراسلونَ
correspondents (genitive/accusative)	muraasil-iina	مراسلينَ
Muslims (nominative)	muslim-uuna	مسلمونَ
Muslims (genitive/accusative)	muslim-iina	مسلمينَ

(2.1) Sound masculine plural noun:

'citizens' muwaaTin-uuna مواطنونَ				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-muwaaTin-uuna	المواطنونَ	muwaaTin-uuna	مواطنونَ
Genitive	al-muwaaTin-iina	المواطنينَ	muwaaTin-iina	مواطنينَ
Accusative	al-muwaaTin-iina	المواطنينَ	muwaaTin-iina	مواطنينَ

(2.2) Sound masculine plural adjective:

'many' kathiir-uuna كثيرونَ				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-kathiir-uuna	الكثيرونَ	kathiir-uuna	كثيرونَ
Genitive	al-kathiir-iina	الكثيرينَ	kathiir-iina	كثيرينَ
Accusative	al-kathiir-iina	الكثيرينَ	kathiir-iina	كثيرينَ

Examples:

مراقبونَ رَسْمِيَّونَ

muraaqib-uuna rasmiyy-uuna
official observers

من المثَقِّفينَ المعتدلينَ

min-a l-muthaqqaf-iina l- mu'tadil-iina
from the moderate intelligensia

عددٌ من الباحثينَ والمفكرينَ المصريينَ واللبنانيينَ

‘adad-un min-a l-baaHith-iina wa-l-mufakkir-iina l-miSriyy-iina wa-l-lubnaaniyy-iina
a number of Egyptian and Lebanese researchers and intellectuals

(2.3) **Nuun-deletion with possessive pronouns and as first term of construct:**

When a noun pluralized with the sound masculine plural suffix functions as the first term of a construct, or if it has a pronoun suffix, the *nuun* (and its short vowel *fatha*) of the suffix is deleted (similar to what occurs with the dual suffix above 5.4.2.1(1.5)).⁹¹ The long case-marking vowels /-uu-/ or /-ii-/ are then left as the remaining part of the suffix.

مراقبو الوفد

muraaqib-uu l-wafd-i

companions of the delegation

من متخرجي الجامعة

min mutaxarrrij-ii l-jaami‘at-i

from the graduates of the university

ستطلب من ناخبيه التصويت.

sa-ta-Tlub-u min naaxib-ii-hi l-taSwiit-a.

It will ask its electors to vote.

- (3) **Declension four: The sound feminine plural (*jam‘ mu‘annath saalim* جمع مؤنث سالم).** The sound feminine plural is also restricted to two case markers. Unlike the dual and sound masculine plural, where the case marking shows up on the long vowel of the suffix, the case marking for the sound feminine plural occurs at the end of the suffix, just as normal triptote short vowel case marking would occur. However, the sound feminine plural is restricted to only two of the short vowels: *Damma* and *kasra*. It cannot take *fatHa*. The genitive/accusative form takes *kasra* or *kasrataan*.

(3.1) **Sound feminine plural noun:**

‘elections’ <i>intixaabaat</i> انتخابات				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-intixaabaat-u</i>	الانتخاباتُ	<i>intixaabaat-u-n</i>	انتخاباتُ
Genitive	<i>al-intixaabaat-i</i>	الانتخاباتِ	<i>intixaabaat-i-n</i>	انتخاباتِ
Accusative	<i>al-intixaabaat-i</i>	الانتخاباتِ	<i>intixaabaat-i-n</i>	انتخاباتِ

⁹¹ See also Chapter 8, 1.2.1.4.

(3.2) **Sound feminine plural adjective:** This form of the adjective is used only to refer to groups of female human beings:

'Egyptian' <i>miSriyyaat</i> مصريات				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-miSriyyaat-u</i>	المصرياتُ	<i>miSriyyaat-u-n</i>	مصرياتُ
Genitive	<i>al-miSriyyaat-i</i>	المصرياتِ	<i>miSriyyaat-i-n</i>	مصرياتِ
Accusative	<i>al-miSriyyaat-i</i>	المصرياتِ	<i>miSriyyaat-i-n</i>	مصرياتِ

Examples of feminine plural accusative/genitive:

أجرى محادثاتٍ.	لسنا يمنياتٍ.	يفتحُ مجالاتٍ واسعةً.
<i>ʾajraa muHaadathaat-in</i>	<i>las-naa yamaniyyaat-in.</i>	<i>ya-ftaH-u majaalaat-in</i>
He held talks.	We are not Yemeni (f.pl.).	<i>waasiʿat-an.</i> ⁹²
		It opens wide fields.

يجري اتصالاتٍ مع جميع الأطراف.

yu-jrii ttiSaalaat-in maʿ-a jamiiʿ-i l-ʾaTraaaf-i

He is in contact with ('implementing contacts') with all sides.

دخلن الصفَّ متأخراتٍ.	رابطةُ النساءِ العربياتِ
<i>daxal-na l-Saff-a mutaʾaxxiraat-in.</i>	<i>raabiTat-u l-nisaaʾ-i l-ʿarabiyyaat-i</i>
They (f.) entered the classroom late.	the Arab women's club

5.4.2.2 DECLENSION FIVE: DIPTOTE (*al-mamnuuʿ min-a l-Sarf* الممنوع من الصرف): The term "diptote" refers to an inflectional category or declension of Arabic nouns and adjectives that are formally restricted *when they are indefinite*:

- They do not take nunation.
- They do not take *kasra* (the genitive marker).

Diptotes therefore, when indefinite, only exhibit two case-markers: final *-u* (*Damma*) for nominative case and final *-a* (*fatHa*) for both genitive and accusative. They look identical in the indefinite genitive and accusative cases.

⁹² Note that the adjective agreeing with *majaalaat-in* shows the accusative as *fatHataan* because it is triptote and belongs to declension one. Both *majaalaat* and *waasiʿa* are in the accusative, but they are marked differently because they fall into two different declensions.

(1) Paradigms

(1.1) Singular diptote noun:

‘desert’ SaHraa ³ صحراء				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-SaHraa ³ -u	الصحراءُ	SaHraa ³ -u	صحراءُ
Genitive	al-SaHraa ³ -i	الصحراءِ	SaHraa ³ -a	صحراءَ
Accusative	al-SaHraa ³ -a	الصحراءَ	SaHraa ³ -a	صحراءَ

(1.2) Plural diptote noun:

‘presidents’ ru ³ asaa ³ رؤساء				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-ru ³ asaa ³ -u	الرؤساءُ	ru ³ assa ³ -u	رؤساءُ
Genitive	al-ru ³ asaa ³ -i	الرؤساءِ	ru ³ asaa ³ -a	رؤساءَ
Accusative	al-ru ³ saa ³ -a	الرؤساءَ	ru ³ asaa ³ -a	رؤساءَ

(1.3) Singular masculine adjective

‘red’ aHmar أحمر				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al- ³ aHmar-u	الأحمرُ	³ aHmar-u	أحمرُ
Genitive	al- ³ aHmar-i	الأحمرِ	³ aHmar-a	أحمرَ
Accusative	al- ³ aHmar-a	الأحمرَ	³ aHmar-a	أحمرَ

(1.4) Singular feminine adjective:

‘red’ Hamraa ³ حمراء				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-Hamraa ³ -u	الحمراءُ	Hamraa ³ -u	حمراءُ
Genitive	al-Hamraa ³ -i	الحمراءِ	Hamraa ³ -a	حمراءَ
Accusative	al-Hamraa ³ -a	الحمراءَ	Hamraa ³ -a	حمراءَ

(1.5) Plural diptote adjective:

أجانب 'foreign' ʔajaanib				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-ʔajaanib-u	الأجانبُ	ʔajaanib-u	أجانبُ
Genitive	al-ʔajaanib-i	الأجانبِ	ʔajaanib-a	أجانبِ
Accusative	al-ʔajaanib-a	الأجانبَ	ʔajaanib-a	أجانبَ

Examples of diptotes in context:

أربعةُ خناجرٍ ʔarbaʕat-u xanaajir-a four daggers	سلطةُ خضراءُ salaTat-un xadraaʔ-u a green salad
بيتٌ أبيضُ bayt-un ʔabyaD-u a white house	إلى مدينةِ بغدادَ ʔilaa madiinat-i baghdaad-a to the city of Baghdad

سيؤدي إلى علاقةٍ أوثقَ بينهما.
sa-yu-ʔaddii ʔilaa ʕalaaqat-in ʔawthaq-a bayn-a-humaa.

It will lead to a firmer relationship between the two of them.

(2) Categories of diptotes: Diptotes fall into categories based on their word structure. The main ones are: diptote by virtue of pattern (singular patterns and plural patterns) and diptote by nature or origin.⁹³

(2.1) Diptote by pattern:

(2.1.1) Diptote plural patterns: Certain noun and adjective plural patterns are inherently diptote, including:

(a) fuʕalaaʔ فُعلاء

Nouns:		Adjectives:	
ministers	wuzaraaʔ وزراء	poor	fuqaraaʔ فقراء
presidents	ruʕasaaʔ رؤساء	strange	ghurabaaʔ غرباء
princes	ʔumaraaʔ أمراء	honorable	shurafaaʔ شرفاء
leaders	zuʕamaaʔ زعماء	generous	kuramaaʔ كرماء

⁹³ See also section 3.2.3.2. in this chapter.

(b) *fa'aalil* فَعَالِل

Nouns:

spices; herbs	<i>tawaabil</i>	تَوَابِل
restaurants	<i>maTaa'im</i>	مَطَاعِم
offices	<i>makaatib</i>	مَكَاتِب
peppers	<i>falaafil</i>	فَلَافِل

Adjectives:

foreign	<i>'ajaanib</i>	أَجَانِب
relative(s)	<i>'aqaarib</i>	أَقَارِب
greatest	<i>'akaabir</i>	أَكَابِر

(c) *fa'aaliil* فَعَالِيل

Nouns:

crowds, throngs	<i>jamaahiir</i>	جَمَاهِير
topics	<i>mawaaDii'</i>	مَوَاضِع
legends	<i>'asaaTiir</i>	أَسَاطِير

(d) *'af'ilaal* أَفْعِلَال with variant *'afi'laa'* أَفْعِلَاء for geminate roots.

Nouns:

friends	<i>'aSdiqaa'</i>	أَصْدِقَاء
few	<i>'aqillaa'</i>	أَقْلَاء
doctors	<i>'aTibbaa'</i>	أَطِبَاء

Adjectives:

dear; strong	<i>'a'izaa'</i>	أَعْزَاء
beloved	<i>'aHibbaa'</i>	أَحْبَاء

(2.1.2) Singular diptote patterns:

- (a) Elative (comparative) adjectives and colors: The diptote pattern is used to indicate the comparative state of the adjective and also for the basic color names.⁹⁴ Both the masculine and feminine forms of the elative are diptote:

(a.1) Masculine singular comparative adjective *'af'al* أَفْعَل:

better, preferable	<i>'afDal</i>	أَفْضَل	green (m.)	<i>'axDar</i>	أَخْضَر
happier	<i>'as'ad</i>	أَسْعَد	blue (m.)	<i>'azraq</i>	أَزْرَق
fewer; less	<i>'aqall</i>	أَقْل	yellow (m.)	<i>'aSfar</i>	أَصْفَر

(a.2) The feminine singular adjective used for colors and physical traits (*fa'laa'* فَعْلَاء):

red	<i>Hamraa'</i>	حَمْرَاء	blonde	<i>shaqraa'</i>	شَقْرَاء
blue	<i>zarqaa'</i>	زَرْقَاء	deaf	<i>Tarshaa'</i>	طَرِشَاء

⁹⁴ For more description of comparative and superlative adjectives, see Chapter 10, section 4.2; for more about color adjectives, see Chapter 10, section 5.1.

- (2.1.2.b) **Nouns or adjectives that have a suffix -aa' after the root consonants.** Nouns of the *fa'laa'* فعلاء pattern. These words are usually feminine in gender, e.g.,

desert SaHraa' صحراء beauty; belle Hasnaa' حسناء

- (2.2) **Diptote by nature or origin:** Certain categories of words fall into the diptote camp by virtue of their etymology or meaning.

- (2.2.1) **Most feminine proper names, e.g.,**

Fatima	<i>faaTima</i>	فاطمة	Zayna	<i>zayna</i>	زينة
Aida	<i>'aa'ida</i>	عائدة	Afaf	<i>'afaaf</i>	عفاف

- (2.2.2) **Proper names of non-Arabic origin:** This includes a large number of place names or names of geographical features in the Middle East whose origins are from other Semitic languages or other (non-Semitic) Middle Eastern languages. A salient characteristic of most of these names is that they do not have the definite article.

Damascus	<i>dimashq</i>	دمشق	Tunis	<i>tuunis</i>	تونس
Baghdad	<i>baghdaad</i>	بغداد	Beirut	<i>bayruut</i>	بيروت
Egypt	<i>miSr</i>	مصر	Lebanon	<i>lubnaan</i>	لبنان
Mecca	<i>makka</i>	مكة	Tigris	<i>dijla</i>	دجلة

Examples:

from Damascus	<i>min dimashq-a</i>	من دمشق
in Tunis	<i>fii tuunis-a</i>	في تونس
to Egypt	<i>'ilaa miSr-a</i>	إلى مصر

Also, other non-Arab place names:⁹⁵

Madrid	<i>madriid</i>	مدريد
Paris	<i>baariis</i>	باريس
Istanbul	<i>istaanbuul</i>	إسطنبول

⁹⁵ In MSA, names of places in other parts of the world, such as *nyuu yuurk* نيو يورك (New York), *waash-inTun* واشنطن (Washington), or *istukhulm* استكهلم (Stockholm) are usually left uninflected, since they are not readily accommodated into the Arabic inflectional class system.

A helpful rule of thumb with Middle Eastern place names in Arabic is that if they carry the definite article, then they inflect as triptotes, e.g.:

Rabat	<i>al-ribaaT</i>	الرباط	Khartoum	<i>al-xarTuum</i>	الخرطوم
Cairo	<i>al-qaahira</i>	القاهرة	Kuwait	<i>al-kuwayt</i>	الكويت

Examples:

from Cairo	<i>min-a l-qaahirat-i</i>	من القاهرة
in Khartoum	<i>fii l-xarTuum-i</i>	في الخرطوم
to Kuwait	<i>’ilaa l-kuwayt-i</i>	إلى الكويت

(2.2.3) **Certain masculine names:** Certain Arabic masculine proper names are diptote. These occur in the following categories:

(2.2.3.a) **Derived from other Semitic languages:** These include many names mentioned in the Bible and in the Qurʾān.

Suleiman, Solomon	<i>sulaymaan</i>	سليمان	Jonah; Jonas	<i>yuunus</i>	يونس
Jacob; James	<i>ya’quub</i>	يعقوب	Abraham	<i>’ibraahiim</i>	إبراهيم

(2.2.3.b) **Derived from verbs rather than adjectives:**

Ahmad ‘I praise’	<i>’a-Hmad-u</i>	أحمد
Yazid ‘He increases’	<i>ya-ziid-u</i>	يزيد

5.4.3 DECLENSION SIX: DEFECTIVE NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES (*’asmaa’ naaqiSa* أسماء ناقصة; *al-ism al-manquuS* الاسم المنقوص). This inflectional class includes primarily words derived from “defective” roots, that is, lexical roots whose final element is a semivowel rather than a consonant.

It includes masculine singular active participles from all forms (I–X) of defective verbs, verbal nouns from forms V and VI, and a set of noun plurals based primarily on the diptote plural pattern *CaCaaCiC*. The characteristic feature of this declension is that the final root consonant appears in the form of two *kasras* in the nominative and genitive indefinite. In an ordinary written text, these short vowels are not visible.⁹⁶

Thus in this declension, the nominative and genitive inflections are identical; the accusative shows inflection for *fatHa* or *fatHataan*.

⁹⁶ The two *kasras* may be added into a printed text (in a newspaper article, for example) should there be ambiguity about the meaning of the word.

5.4.3.1 SINGULAR DEFECTIVE NOUN:

'lawyer' muHaam-in ⁹⁷ محام				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-muHaamii	المحامي	muHaam-in	محامٍ
Genitive	al-muHaamii	المحامي	muHaam-in	محامٍ
Accusative	al-muHaamiya	المحامي	muHaamiy-an	محامياً

5.4.3.2 DIPTOTE DEFECTIVE PLURAL:⁹⁸

'cafés' maqaah-in مقاهٍ				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	al-maqaahii	المقاهي	maqaah-in	مقاهٍ
Genitive	al-maqaahii	المقاهي	maqaah-in	مقاهٍ
Accusative	al-maqaahiy-a	المقاهي	maqaah-iy-a	مقاهي

Further examples:

Singular defectives:

club	naad-in	نادٍ	challenge	taHadd-in	تحدٍّ
judge	qaaD-in	قاضٍ	singer	mughann-in	مغنٍّ

Plural defectives:

songs	'aghaan-in	أغانٍ	nights	layaal-in	ليالٍ
lands	'araaD-in ⁹⁹	أراضٍ	chairs	karaas-in	كراسٍ
hands	'ayd-in ~ 'ayaad-in	أيدي ~ أيادٍ	suburbs	DawaaH-in	ضواحي

⁹⁷ Active participle from Form III defective verb Haamaa/yyu-Haamii, 'to defend, protect.'

⁹⁸ Pattern CaCaaCiC.

⁹⁹ In this ('-r-D) and the following three words, the defective ending has been added to a non-defective root (y-d, l-y-l, k-r-s).

من أيدينا <i>min ʾaydii-naa</i> from our hands	في ضواحي بيروت <i>fii DawaaHii bayruut-a</i> in the suburbs of Beirut
هو محام. <i>huwa muHaam-in.</i> He is a lawyer.	كان محامياً. <i>kaan-a muHaamiy-an.</i> He was a lawyer.

5.4.4 Declension seven: indeclinable nouns (*al-ism al-maqSuur* الاسم المقصور)

Indeclinable nouns show **no variation in case, only definiteness**. They are chiefly derived from defective lexical roots and include, in particular, passive participles (m.) from all forms (I–X) and nouns of place from defective verbs.¹⁰⁰ They normally end with *ʾalif maqSuura*.

5.4.4.1 SINGULAR INDECLINABLE NOUN:

مستشفى <i>mustashfan</i> 'hospital'				
	Definite:		Indefinite:	
Nominative	<i>al-mustashfaa</i>	المستشفى	<i>mustashfan</i>	مستشفى
Genitive	<i>al-mustashfaa</i>	المستشفى	<i>mustashfan</i>	مستشفى
Accusative	<i>al-mustashfaa</i>	المستشفى	<i>mustashfan</i>	مستشفى

5.4.4.2 PLURAL INDECLINABLE NOUN:

قرى <i>quran</i> ¹⁰¹ 'villages'				
Nominative	<i>al-quraa</i>	القرى	<i>quran</i>	قرى
Genitive	<i>al-quraa</i>	القرى	<i>quran</i>	قرى
Accusative	<i>al-quraa</i>	القرى	<i>quran</i>	قرى

¹⁰⁰ For a detailed explanation of the phonological rules applying to indeclinable nouns and adjectives, see Abboud and McCarus 1983, II:14–19.

¹⁰¹ Singular *qarya* قرية.

5.4.4.3 FURTHER EXAMPLES:

(1) Nouns of place:

coffeehouse	<i>maqhan</i>	مقهى	stream, course	<i>majran</i>	مجرى
goal, range	<i>marman</i>	مرمى	building	<i>mabnan</i>	مبنى

(2) Common nouns:

stick, cane	<i>‘aSan</i>	عصاً	villages	<i>quran</i>	قرى
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(3) Verbal nouns

effort	<i>mas‘an</i>	مضى	meaning	<i>ma‘nan</i>	معنى
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(4) Passive participles of derived verb forms (II-X):¹⁰²

a level	<i>mustawan</i>	مستوى	a crossroad	<i>multaqan</i>	ملتقى
a hospital	<i>mustashfan</i>	مستشفى	required; requirement	<i>muqtaDan</i>	مقتضى

(5) Examples in context:

نُقلَ إلى مستشفى الجامعة الأميركية.

nuqil-a ‘ilaa mustashfaa l-jaami‘at-i l-‘amiirkiyyat-i.

He was taken to the hospital of the American University.

تربطُ ثلاثُ قرى كبيرة.

ta-rbiTu thalaath-a quran kabiirat-in.

It links three big villages.

بمقتضى الاتفاقية

bi-muqtaDaa l-ittifaaqiyyat-i

in accordance with the agreement

5.4.5 Declension eight: Invariable nouns

This noun class consists of a set of nouns which vary neither in case nor in definiteness. They are spelled with final *‘alif maqSuura* unless the previous letter is *yaa‘*, in which case, *‘alif Tawiila* is used.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Some passive participles of the derived forms serve also as nouns of place.

¹⁰³ Abboud and McCarus 1983, II:19–20 provide an informative discussion of this declension. ‘Abd al-Latif et al. 1997, 54–55, describe these nouns as having a suffixed feminine marker, *‘alif maqSuura*, and that they are therefore diptote, and do not take nunation.

5.4.5.1 INVARIABLE NOUN ENDING WITH 'alif maqSuura':

'complaint' shakwaa شكوى				
Nominative	al-shakwaa	الشكوى	shakwaa	شكوى
Genitive	al-shakwaa	الشكوى	shakwaa	شكوى
Accusative	al-shakwaa	الشكوى	shakwaa	شكوى

5.4.5.2 INVARIABLE NOUN ENDING WITH 'alif Tawiila':

'gifts' hadaayaa هدايا				
Nominative	al-hadaayaa	الهدايا	hadaayaa	هدايا
Genitive	al-hadaayaa	الهدايا	hadaayaa	هدايا
Accusative	al-hadaayaa	الهدايا	hadaayaa	هدايا

5.4.5.3 SINGULAR INVARIABLE ADJECTIVE:

'higher, highest' 'a'laa أعلى				
Nominative	al-'a'laa	الأعلى	'a'laa	أعلى
Genitive	al-'a'laa	الأعلى	'a'laa	أعلى
Accusative	al-'a'laa	الأعلى	'a'laa	أعلى

5.4.5.4 PLURAL INVARIABLE ADJECTIVE:

'sick' marDaa مرضى				
Nominative	al-marDaa	المرضى	marDaa	مرضى
Genitive	al-marDaa	المرضى	marDaa	مرضى
Accusative	al-marDaa	المرضى	marDaa	مرضى

5.4.5.5 TYPES OF DECLENSION EIGHT NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES. This declension or inflectional class includes a number of noun and adjective types:

- (1) **Singular nouns:** These nouns are feminine in gender, having an ^ʾ*alif maq-Suura* suffixed after the root consonants, chiefly with patterns *fu^ʿlaa*, *fi^ʿlaa* and *fa^ʿlaa*:

gift; benefit	<i>jadwaa</i>	جدوى	fever	<i>Hummaa</i>	حمى
candy, sweet	<i>Halwaa</i>	حلوى	dream	<i>ru^ʿyaa</i>	رؤيا
chaos	<i>fawDaa</i>	فوضى	world; universe	<i>dunyaa</i>	دنيا
memorial; anniversary	<i>dhikraa</i>	ذكرى	one; one of	<i>ʾiHdaa</i>	إحدى

وهذا بالإضافة إلى بقايا المشاكل.

wa-haadhaa bi-l-ʾiDaafat-i ʾilaa baqaayaa l-mashaakil-i.

And this [is] in addition to the rest of the problems.

إحدهما

ʾiHdaa-humaa

one of [the two
of] them

شاهد الدنيا جميلة.

shaahad-a l-dunyaa jamiilat-an.

He saw the world [as] beautiful.

هي إحدى أهم المؤسسات.

hiya ʾiHdaa ʾahamm-i l-muʾassasaat-i.

It is one of the most important
establishments.

- (2) **Singular adjectives**

- (2.1) ***fu^ʿlaa* فعلى:** The feminine singular superlative adjective has the form *fu^ʿlaa*, which puts it into this inflectional class. If the final ^ʾ*alif* is preceded by a *yaaʾ*, it becomes ^ʾ*alif Tawilla*.

finest, best	<i>Husnaa</i> (f. of <i>al-ʾaHsan</i>)	حسنى	middle, most central	<i>wusTaa</i> (f. of <i>ʾawsaT</i>)	وسطى
great, greatest	<i>kubraa</i> (f. of <i>ʾakbar</i>)	كبرى	highest	<i>ʿulyaa</i> (f. of <i>ʾa^ʿlaa</i>)	عليا

أسماء الله الحسنى التسعة والتسعون

ʾasmaaʾ-u llaah-i l-Husnaa l-tisʿat-u wa-l-tisʿuuna

the ninety-nine attributes ('the finest names') of God

يمثل خطوة كبرى إلى الأمام.

yu-maththil-u xuTwat-an kubraa ʾilaa l-ʾamaam-i.

It represents a great step forward.

خلال العصور الوسطى

xilaal-a l-ʿuSuur-i l-wusTaa

during the Middle Ages

- (2.2) **ʾafʿaa** أفعى: The comparative/superlative adjective from defective roots has the form **ʾafʿaa**, which puts it also into this category.

من دون حد أدنى	الشرق الأدنى
<i>min duun-i Hadd-in ʾadnaa</i>	<i>al-sharq-u l-ʾadnaa</i>
without a lower limit (minimum)	the Near East

- (2.3) **The feminine form of ‘first’ ʾuulaa** أولى: This is a feminine adjective; it usually follows a feminine noun.

للمرة الأولى	الجملة الأولى
<i>li-l-marrat-i l-ʾuulaa</i>	<i>al-jumlat-u l-ʾuulaa</i>
for the first time	the first sentence

- (2.4) **The feminine form of ‘other’ ʾuxraa** أخرى

في دول أخرى	مرة أخرى
<i>fii duwal-in ʾuxraa</i>	<i>marrat-an ʾuxraa</i>
in other countries	another time; one more time

- (3) **Invariable plurals:** Included in this set of words are a number of noun and adjective plurals, such as the following:

Nouns:

<i>Halaawaa</i>	pl. of <i>Halwaa</i> ‘sweet, candy’	حلاوى
<i>zawaayaa</i>	pl. of <i>zaawiya</i> ‘corner’	زوايا
<i>qaDaayaa</i>	pl. of <i>qaDiyya</i> ‘issue, problem’	قضايا
<i>baqaayaa</i>	pl. of <i>baqiyya</i> ‘rest, remainder’	بقايا

Adjectives:

<i>kaslaa</i>	pl. of <i>kaslaan</i> ‘lazy’	كسلى
<i>ghaDaabaa</i>	pl. of <i>ghadbaan</i> ‘angry’	غضابى
<i>naSaaraa</i>	pl. of <i>naSraaniyy</i> ‘Christian’	نصارى
<i>qatlaa</i>	pl. of <i>qatiil</i> ‘killed (person), casualty’	قتلى
<i>marDaa</i>	pl. of <i>mariiD</i> ‘sick (person)’	مرضى
<i>jarHaa</i>	pl. of <i>jariiH</i> ‘wounded (person)’	جرحى

عدد ضحايا الزلزال
ʿadad-u DaHaayaa l-zilzaal-i
 the number of **victims** of the earthquake

- (4) **Foreign nouns:** These nouns are not traditionally considered part of this class because they are not of Arabic origin. However, foreign proper names and borrowed words ending in */-aa/* are also invariable in their inflection.

Canada	<i>kanadaa</i>	كندا	cinema	<i>siinamaa</i>	سينما
France	<i>faransaa</i>	فرنسا	potato	<i>baTaaTaa</i>	بطاطا
Korea	<i>kuuriyaa</i>	كوريا	music	<i>muusiiqaa</i>	موسيقى
camera	<i>kaamiiraa</i>	كاميرا			
في زيارة لفرنسا <i>fii ziyaarat-in li-faransaa</i> on a visit to France			في جنوب إسبانيا <i>fii januuub-i isbaaniyaa</i> in southern Spain		
السينما الحديثة <i>al-sinamaa l-Hadiithat-u</i> the modern cinema			في أنهار إفريقيا <i>fii 'anhaar-i 'ifriiqiyaa</i> in the rivers of Africa		

Construct phrases and nouns in apposition

1 The construct phrase or *ʿiDaafa* الإضافة

In Arabic, two nouns may be linked together in a relationship where the second noun determines the first by identifying, limiting, or defining it, and thus the two nouns function as one phrase or syntactic unit. Traditionally, in English descriptions of Arabic grammar, this unit is called the “genitive construct,” the “construct phrase,” or “annexation structure.” In Arabic it is referred to as the *ʿiDaafa* (‘annexation; addition’). As Beeston explains, “The link between a noun and an entity which amplifies it is termed by the Arab grammarians *ʿiDaafa* ‘annexation’, and the noun amplified is said to be *muDaaf* ‘annexed’” (1970, 45).

Similar constructions in English, where two nouns occur together with one defining the other, might be, for example, “coffee cup,” “university library,” or (as one word) “eggshell.” In fact, English often juxtaposes nouns to create new hybrid terms: “airbag,” “seat belt,” or “keyboard.” Another English equivalent to the Arabic construct phrase is a possessive phrase using “of” (“the Queen of Sweden,” “a bottle of wine”) or the possessive suffix /-’s/ on the possessing noun (“Cairo’s cafés,” “the newspaper’s editorial”).

The noun-noun genitive construct is one of the most basic structures in the Arabic language and occurs with high frequency. The first noun, the *muDaaf* (‘the added’), has neither the definite article nor nunation because it is in an “annexed” state, determined by the second noun.¹ But, as the head noun of the phrase, the first noun can be in any case: nominative, genitive, or accusative, depending on the function of the *ʿiDaafa* unit in a sentence structure. The second, or annexing noun, is called the *muDaaf ʿilay-hi*.² It is marked either for definiteness or indefiniteness, and is always in the genitive case.

¹ “In Arabic it is the amplifying term whose definitional status yields the definitional status of the whole phrase: consequently, an annexed substantive will not itself have the article” (Beeston 1970, 46).

² Literally, the noun ‘added to.’ For an extensive discussion (in English) of *ʿiDaafa* constructions in literary Arabic, see Cantarino 1970, II: 92-119. See also Wright 1967, II:198-234 for a summary of the rules for Classical Arabic “Status constructus and the genitive.” Hasan 1987, III:1-180 has a thorough analysis of the genitive construct (in Arabic).

In terms of semantic relationships between the nouns in an Arabic construct phrase, they are very wide-ranging.³ Here they are classified in relatively discrete groups, but clear boundaries cannot always be established between the groups and sometimes membership blurs or overlaps. Eleven general categories are listed here.⁴

1.1 Types of *ʿiDaafas*

1.1.1 Identity relationship

In this broad category, the second term specifies, defines, limits, or explains the particular identity of the first:⁵

Definite:

the city of Jerusalem	<i>madiinat-u l-quḍs-i</i>	مدينة القدس
the minister of justice	<i>wazīir-u l-ʿadl-i</i>	وزير العدل
starfish	<i>najmat-u l-baḥr-i</i>	نجمة البحر

Indefinite:

a police officer	<i>DaabiT-u shurTat-in</i>	ضابط شرطة
a handbag	<i>Haqibat-u yad-in</i>	حقيبة يد
love letters	<i>rasaaʿil-u Hubb-in</i>	رسائل حب

1.1.2 Possessive relationship

In this kind of annexation structure, the first term can be interpreted as belonging (in the very broadest sense) to the second term. In certain respects, it is very close to the next category, the partitive relationship, and it is sometimes difficult to draw a line between the two.

Beirut airport	<i>maTaar-u bayruut-a</i>	مطار بيروت
the father of Hasan	<i>ʿab-uu Hasan-in</i> ⁶	أبو حسن
the leaders of the tribes	<i>zuʿamaaʿ-u l-qabaaʿil-i</i>	زعماء القبائل

1.1.3 Partitive relationship

Here the annexed term (the first term) serves as a determiner to describe a part or quantity of the annexing term. This includes the use of nouns that are quantifiers (“some,” “all,” “most”), certain numbers and fractions, and superlative constructions.

³ Beeston refers to the “semantic polyvalency of the annexation structure” (1970, 46).

⁴ Holes 1995, 166-67 (after Beeston 1970, 45-47) identifies six categories of constructs, including the adjective *ʿiDaafa* or “unreal” *ʿiDaafa* (*ʿiDaafa ghayr Haqiqiyya*).

⁵ Also called the epexegetical genitive, or genitive of explanation.

⁶ Although the second noun, *Hasan*, has nunation, it is considered definite because it is a proper name.

Definite:

some of the films	<i>ba^cD-u l-³aflaam-i</i>	بعض الأفلام
most of the seats	<i>mu^cZam-u l-maqaa^cid-i</i>	معظم المقاعد
the first part of the month	<i>maTla^c-u l-shahr-i</i>	مطلع الشهر
the best conditions	<i>³afDal-u shuruuT-in</i>	أفضل شروط
the end of the line	<i>³aaxir-u l-Taabuur -i</i>	آخر الطابور
two-thirds of the members	<i>thulthaa l-³a^cDaa³-i</i>	ثلثا الأعضاء

Indefinite:

every day	<i>kull-a yawm-in</i>	كل يوم
a quarter of a riyal	<i>rub^c-u riyaaal-in</i>	ربع ريال
any attempt	<i>³ayy-u muHaawalat-in</i>	أي محاولة
four daggers	<i>³arba^cat-u xanaajir-a</i>	أربعة خناجر
a thousand pages	<i>³alf-u safHat-in</i>	ألف صفحة

For further discussion and examples of these categories, see sections on quantifiers, numerals, and superlative adjectives.

1.1.4 Agent relationship

In this type of construct, the **second term is the agent or doer of the action** and the first term is a verbal noun (*maSdar*), the name of an action:

the crowing of the rooster	<i>SiyaaH-u l-diik-i</i>	صياح الديك
the squeaking of the door	<i>Sariir-u l-baab-i</i>	صرير الباب
the departure of the minister	<i>mughaadarat-u l-waziir-i</i>	مغادرة الوزير
the arrival of the queen	<i>wuSuul-u l-malikat-i</i>	وصول الملكة

1.1.4.1 ACTION, AGENT, OBJECT: In this variant of the agent-relationship *³iDaafa*, where the object of the verbal action is mentioned in addition to the doer of the action, then the object follows the *³iDaafa* construction, and is in the accusative case (as object of the underlying transitive verb):

مغادرة الوزير العاصمة
mughaa³adarat-u l-waziir-i l-^caaSimat-a
 the minister's leaving the capital

متابعة المركز الأحداث السياسية

mutaba^c at-u l-markaz-i l-^oaHdaath-a l-siyaasiyyat-a

the center's following [of] political events

تسلم المرشح الرئاسة

tasallum-u l-murashshaH-i l-ri^oaasat-a

the nominee's assuming [of] the presidency

1.1.5 Object relationship

In this type of construct, the **second term is the object of an action**, and the first term is either the name of the action (*maSdar*), or an active participle (*ism-u l-faa^cil*) referring to the doer of the action.

1.1.5.1 FIRST TERM VERBAL NOUN: In this type, the first term is a verbal noun referring to the action itself:

Definite:

the raising of the flag	<i>raf^c-u l-^calam-i</i>	رفع العلم
the protection of infants	<i>Himaayat-u l-^oaTfaal-i</i>	حماية الأطفال
the solution of the problems	<i>Hall-u l-mashaakil-i</i>	حل المشاكل
the regaining of the initiative	<i>isti^caadat-u l-mubaadarat-i</i>	استعادة المبادرة
entering the church	<i>duxuul-u l-kaniisat-i</i>	دخول الكنيسة
criticizing Orientalism	<i>naqd-u l-istishraaq-i</i>	نقد الاستشراق
riding horses	<i>rukuub-u l-xayl-i</i>	ركوب الخيل

Indefinite:

playing a role	<i>lu^cb-u dawr-in</i>	لعب دور
establishing a state	<i>qiyaam-u dawlat-in</i>	قيام دولة
opening fire	<i>^oiTlaaq-u naar-in</i>	إطلاق نار

1.1.5.2 FIRST TERM ACTIVE PARTICIPLE: In the second type of object-relationship *^oiDaafa*, the first term is an active participle denoting the doer of an action:

Definite:

the decision-makers	<i>Saani^c-uu l-qaraar-i</i>	صانعو القرار
companions of the delegation	<i>muraafiq-uu l-wafid-i</i>	مرافقو الوفد
the two leaders of the campaign	<i>qaa^oid-aa l-Hamlat-i</i>	قائد الحملة

Indefinite:

an assistant minister; undersecretary	<i>musaa'id-u waziir-in</i>	مساعدٌ وزيرٍ
a shoemaker	<i>Saani' -u 'aHdhiyat-in</i>	صانعٌ أحذيةٍ
an anteater	<i>'aakil-u naml-in</i>	آكلٌ نملٍ

1.1.6 Compositional relationship

In this structure, the second noun of the construct expresses the nature or composition of the first:

Definite:

the railway ('road of iron')	<i>sikkat-u l-Hadiid-i</i>	سكةُ الحديدِ
bouquets of flowers	<i>baaqaat-u l-zuhuur-i</i>	باقاتُ الزهورِ

Indefinite:

a chain of mountains	<i>silsilat-u jibaa'l-in</i>	سلسلةُ جبالٍ
lentil soup	<i>shuurbat-u 'adas-in</i>	شوربةُ عدسٍ
a bunch of grapes	<i>'unquud-u 'inab-in</i>	عنقودُ عنبٍ
a kindergarten ('garden of children')	<i>rawDat-u 'aTfaal-in</i>	روضةُ أطفالٍ

1.1.7 Measurement relationship

Where the first noun expresses the nature of the measurement and the second (and third) the extent or the measurement itself. These occur mainly in indefinite *'iDaafas*.

a stone's throw	<i>marmaa Hajr-in</i>	مرمى حجرٍ
[for] a period of two days	<i>muddat-a yawm-ayni</i>	مدةٌ يومينِ
to a distance of ten meters	<i>'ilaa masaafat-i 'ashrat-i 'amtaar-in</i>	إلى مسافةٍ عشرةِ أمتارٍ
a kilo of bananas	<i>kiiluu mawz-in</i>	كيلو موزٍ

1.1.8 Contents relationship

Where the first term denotes a container and the second or annexing term the contents of the container:

Definite:

boxes of gold	<i>Sanaadiiq-u l-dhahab-i</i>	صناديقُ الذهبِ
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Indefinite:

a cup of coffee	<i>finjaan-u qahwat-in</i>	فنجانٌ قهوةٌ
a pack of gum	<i>‘ulbat-u ‘ilkat-in</i>	علبةٌ علكةٌ
a bag of nuts	<i>kiis-u fustuq-in</i>	كيسٌ فستقٌ

1.1.9 Purpose relationship

Here the second term explains or defines the particular purpose or use of the first term:

a marble quarry	<i>maqla‘-u ruxaam-in</i>	مقلعٌ رخامٌ
a rescue plane	<i>Taa’ irat-u ‘inqaadh-in</i>	طائرةٌ إنقاذٌ
greeting cards	<i>baTaaqaat-u tahni’at-in</i>	بطاقاتٌ تهنئةٌ

1.1.10 Quotation or title relationship

Here the second term is a title or a quotation. When this is the case, the words of the title or quotation in quotation marks are considered to be set off from the case-marking requirements of the second term of the *‘iDaafa*, and are inflected independently, not necessarily in the genitive.

لفظ «الجهاد»	كتاب «ألف ليلة وليلة»
<i>lafZ-u “al-jihaad-u”</i>	<i>kitaab-u “alf-u laylat-in wa-laylat-un”</i>
the expression “jihad”	the book “The Thousand and One Nights”

محاضرة بعنوان «الشرق الأوسط وتحدياته»
<i>muHaaDarat-un bi-‘unwaan-i “al-sharq-u l-‘awsaT-u wa-taHaddiyaat-u-hu”</i>
a lecture entitled “The Middle East and Its Challenges”

فلم «لحن السعادة»
<i>film-u “laHn-u l-sa‘aadat-i”</i>
the film “The Sound of Music” (‘the tune of happiness’)

1.1.11 Clause relationship

A clause in its entirety may occasionally form the second term of an *‘iDaafa*. For purposes of clarity, the boundary between first term and second term is indicated by a plus sign (+) in the Arabic transliteration:

في حال استمر الوضع على ما هو عليه
<i>fii Haal-i + stamarr-a l-waD‘-u ‘alaa maa huwa ‘alay-hi</i>
in case the situation remains as it is

في وقت كان كل شيء معدا لتحقيق تقدم
<i>fii waqt-i + kaan-a kull-u shay’-in mu‘add-an li-taHqiq-i taqaddum-in</i>
at a time [when] everything was prepared for achieving [some] progress

في وقت تدرك الحقيقة إدراكا كليا

fii waqt-i + tu-drik-u l-Haqiiqat-a ʔidraak-an kulliyy-an

at a time [when] it fully realizes the truth

1.2 Rules of the noun construct (إضافة *ʔiDaafa*):

1.2.1 The first term of the construct

The first term of a construct phrase has neither the definite article nor nunation because it is defined through the second term, which determines the definiteness or indefiniteness of the entire phrase. The first term of a construct phrase cannot have a possessive pronoun suffix.

The first term carries a case marker which is determined by the syntactic role of the phrase in the sentence or clause. Examples:

1.2.1.1 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS NOMINATIVE:

مشكلة الشرق الأوسط معقدة.

mushkilat-u l-sharq-i l-ʔawsaT-i muʔaqqadat-un.

The problem of the Middle East is complex.

1.2.1.2 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS ACCUSATIVE:

حضر حفلة وضع الحجر الأساس.

HaDar-a Haflat-a waDʕ-il-Hajr-i l-ʔasaas-i.

He attended the party for the laying of the cornerstone.

1.2.1.3 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS GENITIVE:

هي على استعداد للعب دور نشيط.

hiya ʕalaa stiʕdaad-in li-laʕb-i dawr-in nashiiT-in.

She is ready to play an active role ('for playing an active role').

1.2.1.4 THE RESTRICTION ON NUNATION on the first term of the construct applies not only to the nunation which marks indefiniteness, but also to the **final nuuns of the dual and the sound masculine plural**. These *nuuns* are deleted on the first term of a construct phrase.

وزيرا العدل والإعلام

waziir-aa l-ʕadl-i wa l-ʔiʕlaam-i

the two ministers of justice and
information

مهربو المخدرات

muharrib-uu l-mukhaddiraat-i

drug smugglers ('smugglers of drugs')

لوزيري الخارجية <i>li-waziir-ay-i l-xaarijiyyat-i</i> to the two foreign ministers	لمديري المنظمات <i>li-mudiir-ii l-munaZZamaat-i</i> to the directors of the organizations
رياضيو كوبا <i>riyaaDiyy-uu kuubaa</i> the athletes of Cuba	مزارعو الزيتون <i>muzaari'-uu l-zaytuun-i</i> olive growers ('growers of olives')

1.2.1.5 PAUSE FORM PRONUNCIATION OF *taa'* *marbuuTa* AS FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT When a word ending in *taa'* *marbuuTa* is the first word of a construct phrase, the *taa'* is pronounced, even in pause form. For more on this see Chapter 2, section 3.4.3.2.

مدينة بيروت <i>madiinat bayruut</i> the city of Beirut	سلسلة جبال <i>silsilat jibaaI</i> a chain of mountains	ثلاثة أيام <i>thalaathat 'ayyaam</i> three days
--	--	---

1.2.2 The second or final term of the construct

The second or final term is in the genitive case (whether or not it is overtly marked); it may be either definite or indefinite; may be a noun or a demonstrative pronoun. It may have a possessive pronoun suffix.

1.2.2.1 SECOND TERM = NOUN:

Definite:

the engineers' quarter	<i>Hayy-u l-muhandis-iina</i>	حي المهندسين
the kings of India	<i>muluuk-u l-hind-i</i>	ملوك الهند

Indefinite:

a lunch banquet	<i>ma'dabat-u ghadaa'-in</i>	مأدبة غداء
a beauty queen	<i>malikat-u jamaal-in</i>	ملكة جمال
six schools	<i>sitt-u madaaris-a</i>	ست مدارس

1.2.2.2 SECOND TERM = DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN: A demonstrative pronoun may serve as the second term of a construct phrase, but as an invariable word, it does not inflect for case.

the meaning of this	<i>ma'naa haadhaa</i>	معنى هذا
all (of) this	<i>kull-u haadhaa</i>	كل هذا
the result of that	<i>natijjat-u dhaalika</i>	نتيجة ذلك

1.2.2.3 SECOND TERM HAS PRONOUN SUFFIX:

his birthplace	masqaT-u ra's-i-hi	مَسْقَطُ رَأْسِهِ
marketing their (f.) production	taswiiq-u 'intaaj-i-hinna	تَسْوِيقُ إِنْتَاجِهِنَّ
bearing their responsibilities	taHammul-u mas'uuliyyaat-i-haa	تَحْمِلُ مَسْئُولِيَّاتِهَا
raising his level	raf 'u mustawaa-hu	رَفَعَ مُسْتَوَاهُ
the withdrawal of its units	saHb-u waHdaat-i-hi	سَحَبُ وَحْدَاتِهِ

1.2.2.4 MORE THAN ONE NOUN MAY BE CONJOINED AS THE SECOND TERM OF THE CONSTRUCT:

في سياستي الدفاع والتجارة
fii siyaasatay-i l-difaa' i wa-l-tijaarat-i
 in the two policies of defense and trade

جراح الأنف والأذن والحنجرة
jarraaH-u l-'anf-i wa-l-'udhn-i wa-l-Hanjarat-i
 nose, ear, and throat surgeon ('surgeon of nose, ('and') ear and throat')

1.3 Modifiers of the construct

1.3.1 Modifying the first term

A construct phrase cannot be interrupted by modifiers for the first term. Any adjectives or other modifiers applying to the first term of the *'iDaafa* must follow the entire *'iDaafa*. Modifiers for the first term agree with it in gender, number, case, and definiteness.

أشعة الشمس الدافئة
'ashi'at-u l-shams-i l-daafi'at-u
 the warm rays of the sun

منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية
munaZZamat-u l-taHriir-i l-filisTiiniyyat-u
 the Palestinian Liberation Organization

إلى مطار أبو ظبي الدولي
'ilaa maTaari-i 'abuu Zabiyy-i l-duwaliyy-i⁷
 to the Abu Dhabi international airport

طبيب أسنان جيد
Tabiib-u 'asnaan-in jayyid-un
 a good dentist ('doctor of teeth')

أركان الإسلام الخمسة
'arkaan-u l-'islaam-i l-xamsat-u
 the five pillars of Islam

جواز السفر المسروق
jawaaz-u l-safari-i l-masruuq-u
 the stolen passport

⁷ Technically this should be *'ilaa maTaari-i 'abii Zabiyy-i l-duwaliyy-i*, with inflection of *'ab* in the genitive, but in newspaper Arabic the name of the emirate is often treated as a lexical unit and not inflected.

1.3.2 Modifying the second term

The second term of the construct may be modified by adjectives directly following it and agreeing with it in definiteness, gender, number, and case.

في منطقة الشرق الأوسط <i>fii mintaaqat-i l-sharq-i l-ʔawsat-i</i> in the region of the Middle East	ملحق الشؤون الثقافية <i>mulHaq-u l-shuʔuun-i l-thaqaafiyyat-i</i> cultural affairs officer ('attaché')
إسعاف الدفاع المدني <i>ʔisʕaaf-u l-difaaʕ-i l-madaniyy-i</i> civil defense ambulance	لبناء أسس جديدة وسليمة <i>li-binaaʔ-i ʔusus-in jadiidat-in</i> <i>wa-saliimat-in</i> to build secure new foundations

في افتتاح المعرض الدولي
fii ftitaaH-i l-maʕriD-i l-duwaliyy-i
at the opening of the international exhibit

1.3.3 Modification of both terms of the construct

When a construct or *ʔiDaaʕa* needs modifiers for both terms, the general order is to put the modifiers for the last term closest to the *ʔiDaaʕa*, and then modifiers for the first term(s), in ascending order. Each modifier agrees with its noun in case, gender, number, and definiteness.

مجمع اللغة العربية الأردني
majmaʕ-u l-luġhat-i l-ʕarabiyyat-i l-ʔurduniyy-u
the Jordanian Arabic Language Academy
(literally: 'academy (of) the-language the-Arabic the-Jordanian')

رئيس مجمع اللغة العربية الأردني السابق
raʔ iis-u majmaʕ-i l-luġhat-i l-ʕarabiyyat-i l-ʔurduniyy-i l-saabiq-u
the former president of the Jordanian Arabic Language Academy
(literally: 'president (of the) academy (of) the-language the-Arabic the-Jordanian the-former')

1.4 Demonstrative pronouns in construct phrases

1.4.1 Demonstrative with first term of construct

Normally, when a noun is modified by a demonstrative pronoun, that pronoun precedes the noun and the noun also has the definite article (for example, *haa-dhaa l-qarn-u* 'هذا القرن' 'this century').⁸ However, when a noun as first term of a construct is modified by a demonstrative pronoun, that pronoun follows the entire

⁸ For further discussion of demonstrative pronouns, see Chapter 13.

ⁱDaafa structure because of the restriction that prevents the presence of the definite article on the first term of a construct. The pronoun agrees with the first term in gender and number.

في حملة التفتيش هذه
fii Hamlat-i l-taftiish-i haadhihi
 in this inspection campaign

لدعم وجهة النظر هذه
li-da^cm-i wujhat-i l-naZar-i haadhihi
 to support this point of view

مرحلة الجمود هذه
marHalat-u l-jumuud-i haadhihi
 this level of solidity

خلال مدة الانتظار تلك
xilaal-a muddat-i l-intiZaar-i tilka
 during that period of waiting

1.4.2 Demonstrative with second term of construct

The second term of a construct or **ⁱDaafa** may be preceded directly by a demonstrative pronoun plus definite article because the second term can be marked for definiteness:

قيمة هذه المخدرات
qiimat-u haadhihi l-muxaddiraat-i
 the value of these drugs

شمس ذلك العهد
shams-u dhaalika l-^aahd-i
 the sun of that time

تدمير تلك الفيروسات
tadmiir-u tilka l-fiiruusaat-i
 the destruction of those viruses

1.5 Complex or multi-noun construct

A construct phrase may consist of more than two nouns related to each other through the use of the genitive case. When this happens, the second and all subsequent nouns are in the genitive case and only the last noun in the entire construct phrase is marked for either definiteness or indefiniteness. Thus, the medial nouns, the ones which are neither first nor last, are all in the genitive, and none of them have nunation or the definite article. That is, the medial nouns combine certain features of being the first term of an **ⁱDaafa** (no definite article or nunation) with one feature of being the second term of an **ⁱDaafa** (marked for genitive case).

1.5.1 Construct with three nouns

تعيين وزير الداخلية
ta^cyiin-u waziir-i l-daaxiliyyat-i
 the appointment of the minister of interior

جميع أفراد الأسرة
jami^c-u ^afraad-i l-^uusrat-i
 all the members of the family

رفعُ مستوى المعيشة

raf^u mustawaa l-maⁱiishat-i

raising the standard of living

مُدُّ يدِ العونِ

madd-u yad-i l-^aawn-i

extending a helping hand ('the hand of help')

رئيس تحرير المجلة

ra^{iis}-u taHriir-i l-majallat-i

the editor-in-chief of the magazine ('chief of the editing of the magazine')

1.5.2 Construct with four nouns

احتفالٌ زرع شجرة أرزٍ

iHtifaal-u zar^e-i shajarat-i ^{ar}z-in

celebration of the planting of a cedar tree

بمناسبة ذكرى استقلال بلاده

bi-munaasabat-i dhikraa stiqlaal-i bilaad-i-hi

on the occasion of the commemoration of his country's independence

لمعالجة مشكلة إدمان المخدرات

li-mu^aaalajat-i mushkilat-i ^{id}maan-i l-mukhaddiraat-i

for handling the problem of drug addiction

تحت سماء جنوب فرنسا

taHat-a samaa^a-i januub-i faransaa

under the skies of southern ('the south of') France

في دول جنوب شرق آسيا

fii duwal-i januub-i sharq-i ^aaasiyaa

in the countries of Southeast Asia

1.5.3 Construct with five nouns

تطبيقُ جميع قرارات مجلس الأمن

taTbiiq-u jamii^e-i qaraaraat-i majlis-i l-^aamn-i

the application of all of the resolutions of the Security Council

سرقةُ جواز سفر أحد اللاعبين

sarqat-u jawaaz-i safar-i ^aHad-i l-laa^{ib}-iina

the theft of the passport of one of the athletes

وزراءُ نفط دول مجلس التعاون

wuzaraa^a-u nifT-i duwal-i majlis-i l-ta^aaawun-i

the oil ministers of the states of the [Gulf] Cooperation Council

1.6 Joint annexation

Traditional Arabic style requires that the first term of the *'iDaafa* or annexation structure be restricted to one item. It cannot be two or more items joined with *wa*- 'and.' If more than one noun is to be included in the expression then they follow the *'iDaafa* and refer back to it by means of a **resumptive pronoun suffix**.

وَيُرَى فِي الصَّفِّ الثَّانِي مِرَافِقُو الْوَفْدِ وَمَعَاوِنُهُ.
wa-yuraa fii l-Saff-i l-thaanii muraafiq-uu l-wafd-i wa-mu'aawin-uu-hu.

Seen in the second row are the companions and assistants of the delegation ('the companions of the delegation **and its assistants**').

بِالنِّسْبَةِ إِلَى أَسَاتِذَةِ التَّارِيخِ وَطُلَّابِهِ
bi-l-nisbat-i 'ilaa 'asaatidhat-i l-taariix-i wa-Tullaab-i-hi

in relation to the professors and students of history ('the professors of history **and its students**')

وَسَطَ حِمَاسَةِ أَعْضَاءِ الْمَوْثَمِ وَهَتَافَاتِهِمْ
wasT-a Hamaasat-i 'a'Daa'-i l-mu'tamar-i wa-hutaafaat-i-him

amidst the enthusiasm and cheers of the members of the conference ('the enthusiasm of the conference members **and their cheers**')

يُضَمُّ أَبْرَزَ الْفَنَانِينَ وَأَعْظَمَهُمْ.
ya-Dumm-u 'abraz-a l-fannaan-iina wa-'a'Zam-a-hum.

It brings together the most prominent and greatest artists ('most prominent artists **and the greatest of them**').

This rule is widely observed. However, it is also regularly broken, and "joint annexation is rapidly gaining ground" (Beeston 1970, 48), as the following examples show:

مَسَاجِدُ وَقُصُورُ الْمَدِينَةِ
masaajid-u wa-quSuur-u l-madiinat-i
 the mosques and castles of the city

فِي بَحِيرَاتٍ وَأَنْهَارٍ إِفْرِيقِيَا
fii buHayraat-i wa-'anhaar-i 'ifriiqiyaa
 in the lakes and rivers of Africa

نُمُو وَتَطَوُّرُ اللُّغَةِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ
numuww-u wa-taTawwur-u l-lughat-i l-'arabiyyat-i
 the growth and development of the Arabic language

احْتِرَامُ قِيَمٍ وَعَادَاتِ الْحَضَارَاتِ الْآخَرَى
iHtiraam-u qiyam-i wa-'aadaat-i l-HaDaaraat-i l-'uxraa
 respecting the values and customs of other cultures

أكبر وأحسن النباتات

ʿakbar-u wa-ʿaHsan-u l-nabaataat-i

the biggest and best plants

باسم شعب وحكومة المملكة

bi-sm-i shaʿb-i wa-Hukuumat-i l-mamlakat-i

in the name of the people and the government of the kingdom

These examples and others show that joint annexation is an area of modern Arabic syntax where the traditional rules are still in use but routinely violated. This particular area of Arabic grammatical structure is in a state of flux, with the newer structure being widely used in everyday language.

1.7 Special cases of constructs

1.7.1 The use of *ʿadam* and *ʿiʿaada*

Two verbal nouns, *ʿadam* ‘lack of’ and *ʿiʿaada* ‘repetition, resumption’ are frequently used in **lexicalizing** functions, as the first term of *ʿiDaafas* to create compound lexical items.⁹

1.7.1.1 *ʿadam* + NOUN: The noun *ʿadam* is a privative term that expresses negative concepts or “lack of”: it is used with verbal nouns to create compound Arabic expressions conveying concepts expressed in English by prefixes such as “non-,” “in-,” or “dis-,” or to express what would be a negative infinitive.

impermissibility	<i>ʿadam-u jawaaz-in</i>	عدم جواز
nonexistence	<i>ʿadam-u wujuud-in</i>	عدم وجود
instability	<i>ʿadam-u stiqaar-in</i>	عدم استقرار
insincerity	<i>ʿadam-u jiddiyyat-in</i>	عدم جدية
discomfort	<i>ʿadam-u rtiyaaH-in</i>	عدم ارتياح
displeasure	<i>ʿadam-u riDaaʿ-in</i>	عدم رضاء

Examples:

من المهمّ عدم تقديم الكثير من التنازلات.

min-a l-muhimm-i ʿadam-u taqdiim-i l-kathiir-i min-a l-tanaazulaat-i.

It is important **not to offer** too many concessions.

⁹ See also Chapter 37, section 2.2.5 in this book and Holes 1995, 266–67.

عدم ارتياح الجانبين

‘adam-u rtiyaaH-i l-jaanib-ayni

the uneasiness of both sides

1.7.1.2 *‘i‘aada* + NOUN ‘RE-’: The noun *‘i‘aada* used as the first term of a construct with a verbal noun, expresses concepts of repetition or renewal.¹⁰

إعادة تعمير

‘i‘aadat-u ta‘miir-in

rebuilding

إعادة عدّ الأصوات

‘i‘aadat-u ‘add-i l-‘aSwaat-i

recounting the vote

إعادة فرز الأصوات

‘i‘aadat-u farz-i l-‘aSwaat-i

re-sorting the votes

إعادة فرض العقوبات

‘i‘aadat-u farD-i l-‘uquubaat-i

the re-imposition of sanctions

إعادة تعيين الوزير

‘i‘aadat-u ta‘yiin-i l-waziir-i

re-appointment of the minister

إعادة فتح سفارتها

‘i‘aadat-u fatH-i sifaarat-i-haa

the reopening of its embassy

1.7.2 Official titles as constructs

Many official titles of dignitaries and royalty consist of genitive constructs, for example:

His Highness the Prince

sumuww-u l-‘amiir-i

سمو الأمير

His Highness the Crown Prince

sumuww-u waliy-i l-‘ahd-i

سمو ولي العهد

His Majesty the King

jalaalat-u l-malik-i

جلالة الملك

His Majesty the Sultan

jalaalat-u l-SulTaana-i

جلالة السلطان

His Royal Highness

SaaHib-u l-sumuww-i l-malikiyy-i

صاحبُ سمو الملكي

His Eminence

SaaHib-u l-samaaHat-i

صاحبُ السماحة

His Excellency the Minister

ma‘aalii l-waziir-i

معالي الوزير

1.7.3 Use of *nafs* ‘same’ as first term

A frequent genitive construct is the use of the noun *nafs* ‘self’ or ‘same’ as the first term in order to express the concept of “the same _____.”¹¹

ذكرت نفس الشيء.

dhakar-at nafs-a l-shay‘-i.

It mentioned the same thing.

في نفس الوقت

fii nafs-i l-waqt-i

at the same time

¹⁰ The noun *‘i‘aada* is a verbal noun from the Form IV verb *‘a‘aad-a /yu-‘iid-u* ‘to renew, repeat, restore, re-do.’

¹¹ See also section 2.3.

تعمل جميعها على نفس المنوال.

ta-^cmal-u jamii-^c-u-haa ^calaa nafs-i l-minwaal-i.

They all work the same way.

1.7.4 Coalescence of the construct

Certain frequently used constructs have come to function as solid units and are even occasionally written together as one word. This fusing of terms is rare in Arabic, but does happen occasionally:

1.7.4.1 FIXED EXPRESSIONS:

capital (financial resources)	<i>ra's-u maal-in</i>	رأس مال
	<i>ra'smaal</i>	رأسمال
administrative officer (of a town or village)	<i>qaa'im-u maqaam-in</i>	قائم مقام
	<i>qaa'imaqaam</i>	قائمقام

1.7.4.2 THREE TO NINE HUNDRED: Although optionally written as one word, the first term still inflects for case. For example:

five hundred	<i>xams-u mi'at-in</i>	خمس مئة
	<i>xams-u-mi'at-in</i>	خمسمة
nine hundred	<i>tis-^c-u mi'at-in</i>	تسع مئة
	<i>tis-^c-u-mi'at-in</i>	تسعمة

1.8 Avoiding the construct phrase or *'iDaafa*

Sometimes an *'iDaafa* is avoided by means of linking two nouns with a preposition, usually *min* or *li-*. This happens especially if the first noun is modified by an adjective or a phrase that would otherwise have to be placed after the *'iDaafa* construction. It is a stylistic option.

القسم الأخير من الكتاب
al-qism-u l-²axiir-u min-a l-kitaab-i
the last part of the book

في النصف الثاني من القرن العشرين
fii l-niSf-i l-thaanii min-a l-qarn-i l-^cishriina
in the second half of the twentieth century

خسوف جزئي للقمر
xusuuf-un juz'iiyy-un li-l-qamar-i
a partial eclipse of the moon

المفوض العام لمكتب المقاطعة
al-mufawwaD-u l-^caamm-u li-maktab-i
l-muqaaTa^cat-i
the general commissioner of the boycott
office

ظهر العدد الجديد من المجلة.

Zahar-a l-^cadad-u l-jadiid-u *min-a* l-majallat-i.

The new issue of the magazine appeared.

حضرُوا سباقًا للخيل.

HaDar-uu sibaaq-an li-l-xayl-i.

They attended a horse race ('a race of horses').

1.9 Adjectives in construct phrases

Adjectives or participles functioning as adjectives may occur in construct phrases either as the first or second term, in the following types of constructions.

1.9.1 Modifier as first term of construct

Sometimes an adjective or a participle with adjectival meaning will appear as the first term of a construct phrase instead of following the noun as a modifier. In these phrases the adjective remains in the masculine gender, but it may be singular or plural. These expressions are often set phrases and tend to be used with particular adjectives, as follows.

في قديم الزمان

fii *qadiim-i* l-zamaan-i

in olden times

لشرقي المتوسط

li-sharqiyy-i l-muTawassit-i

to the eastern Mediterranean

مع كبار المسؤولين

ma^c-a *kibbaar-i* l-mas'uul-iina

with the senior officials

لمجرد إثبات

li-mujarrad-i 'ithbaat-in

for mere confirmation

في مختلف المدن

fii *muxtalif-i* l-mudun-i

in various cities

لإرضاء مختلف الأذواق

li-^oirDaa^o-i *muxtalif-i* l-^oadhwaaq-i

in order to please various tastes

في شتى مجالات الاقتصاد

fii *shattaa* *majaalaat-i* l-iqtisaa*d-i*

in diverse fields of economics

في شتى الأنشطة

fii *shattaa* l-^oanshiTat-i

in various activities

1.9.2 The adjective or "false" *'iDaafa* (*'iDaafa ghayr Haqiqiyya* إضافة غير حقيقية)

The "false" or "unreal" *'iDaafa*, also called the "adjective" *'iDaafa*, is a special case of the construct phrase where an adjective serves as the first term and acts as a modifier of a noun. Not only can an adjective serve as the first item in this structure, but, contrary to the general rules for the *'iDaafa* structure, this adjective may take the definite article if the phrase modifies a definite noun. Since this type of construct violates the rule against the first term of a construct phrase taking a definite article, it is termed "unreal" or "false."

This construction is a way of expressing a quality of a particular component of an item, often equivalent to hyphenated expressions in English such as: *long-term*,

hard-nosed, or *cold-blooded*. It is generally used to express qualities of “inalienable possession,” that is, qualities that are “naturally attributable” to their owners.¹²

The adjective *ʾiDaafa* is quite frequent in MSA because it is a construction that can be used to express recently coined, complex modifying terms such as “multi-lateral,” or “long-range.”

In this construction, the adjective agrees with the noun it modifies in case, number, and gender. The second term of the adjective *ʾiDaafa* is a definite noun in the genitive case and refers to a particular property of the modified noun.

1.9.2.1 ADJECTIVE *ʾiDaafa* AS NOUN MODIFIER:

- (1) **Modifying a definite noun:** When modifying a definite noun, the first term of the adjective *ʾiDaafa* agrees with the noun in gender, number, and case, and it also has the definite article:

الرجل المثقف الطويل القامة
al-rajul-u l-muthaqqaf-u l-Tawiil-u l-qaamat-i
 the cultured, tall ('tall of height') man

وقد أرسلت الآلة الأمريكية الصنع من العاصمة.
wa-qad ʾursil-at-i l-ʾaalat-u l-ʾamriikiyyat-u l-San^c-i min-a l-ʾaaSimat-i.
 The American-made instrument was sent from the capital.

في هذه القضية المتعددة الجوانب
fii haadhihi l-qaDiyyat-i l-muta^caddidat-i l-jawaanib-i
 in this multi-sided issue

- (2) **Modifying an indefinite noun:** When modifying an indefinite noun, the first term of the adjective *ʾiDaafa* does not have the definite article. However, neither does it have nunation, because this is prevented by its being the first term of an *ʾiDaafa*. It agrees with the noun it modifies in gender, number, and case:

هو أول مسؤول أمريكي رفيع المستوى يزور البحرين.
huwa ʾawwal-u masʾuul-in ʾamriikiyy-in rafii^c-i l-mustawaa ya-zuur-u l-baHrayn-a.
 He is the first high-level American official to visit Bahrain.¹³

تسمى أشجاراً دائمة الخضرة.
tu-sammaa ʾashjaar-an daaʾimat-a l-xaDrat-i.
 They are called evergreen trees.

¹² Killean 1970, 11. Killean's article “The false construct in Modern Literary Arabic” is one of the few that deal with the syntactic and semantic analysis of this structure from the point of view of generative syntax.

¹³ Although the English equivalent of this sentence uses the definite article to refer to the “American official,” the Arabic structure using the term *ʾawwal* ‘first’ is followed by an indefinite noun.

إمرأة مكتوفة الذراعين
imra'at-un maktuufat-u l-dhiraa'ayni
 a woman with crossed arms

ذلك عقب تدخل عالي المستوى
dhaalika 'aqib-a tadaxxul-in 'aalii l-mustawaa
 that [was] right after a high-level intervention

1.9.2.2 ADJECTIVE 'iDaafa AS PREDICATE OF EQUATIONAL SENTENCE: When serving as the predicate of an equational sentence, the first term of the adjective 'iDaafa does **not** have the definite article, in keeping with the rules for predicate adjectives. It agrees with the noun it refers to in gender, number, and case.

اللهجة المصرية واسعة الانتشار.
al-lahjat-u l-miSriyyat-u waasi'at-u l-intishaar-i.
 The Egyptian dialect is widespread.

إن الشطرنج هندي الأصل.
'inna l-shaTranj-a hindiyy-u l-'aSl-i.
 (Indeed) chess is Indian in origin.

الأرض مستديرة الشكل.
al-'arD-u mustadiirat-u l-shakl-i.
 The earth is circular in shape.

هذا صعب الاحتمال.
haadhaa Sa'b-u l-iHtimaal-i.
 This is hard to bear.

1.9.3 The descriptive construct with *ghayr* plus adjective

In this unique construction, an adjective serves as the second term of a construct phrase. The noun *ghayr* 'non-, un-, in-, other than' is used as the first term of the construct in order to express negative or privative concepts denoting absence of a quality or attribute. As the first term of a construct, *ghayr* carries the same case as the noun it modifies. As a noun which is the first term of an 'iDaafa, it **cannot** have the definite article. The second term of the 'iDaafa construction is an adjective or participle in the genitive case which agrees with the noun being modified in gender, number, and definiteness. Here are some examples:

unsuitable	<i>ghayr-u munaasib-in</i>	غير مناسب
indirect	<i>ghayr-u mubaashir-in</i>	غير مباشر
untrue	<i>ghayr-u SaHiiH-in</i>	غير صحيح
insufficient	<i>ghayr-u kaaf-in</i>	غير كاف
non-Arab	<i>ghayr-u 'arabiyy-in</i>	غير عربي
undesirable	<i>ghayr-u marghuub-in fii-hi</i>	غير مرغوب فيه

صعوبات غير متوقعة
Su'uubaat-un ghayr-u mutawaqqa'at-in
 unexpected difficulties

بأساليب غير شريفة
bi-'asaaliib-a ghayr-i shariifat-in
 in unscrupulous ('non-noble') ways

حسب أرقام غير رسمية

Hasab-a 'arqaam-in ghayr-i rasmiyyat-in

according to **unofficial** figures

2 Nouns in apposition (*badal* بدل)

Nouns or noun phrases are said to be in *apposition* with one another when they are juxtaposed and both refer to the same entity, but in different ways.¹⁴ Phrases such as “my cat, Blondie,” “Queen Victoria,” “President Bush,” or “King Hussein” consist of nouns in apposition. As a general rule, the nouns agree in case, number, gender, and definiteness, but one subset of appositional specifiers requires the accusative case.

2.1 Straight apposition

In straight apposition, the noun in apposition takes the same case as the noun with which it is in apposition.

2.1.1 Names and titles

The title (normally with the definite article) is followed directly by the name of the person:

King Fahd	<i>al-malik-u fahd-un</i>	الملكُ فهدٌ
The Emperor Constantine	<i>al-imbiraaTuur qusTanTiin</i>	الإمبراطور قسطنطين
The Prophet Muhammad	<i>al-nabiyy-u muHammad-un</i>	النبيُّ محمدٌ
Queen Nur	<i>al-malikat-u nuur-u</i>	الملكةُ نورٌ
Father Joseph	<i>al-'ab-u yuusuf-u</i>	الأبُ يوسفُ
Professor Faris	<i>al-'ustaadh-u faaris-un</i>	الأستاذُ فارسٌ
Colonel Qadhdhaafi	<i>al-'aqiid-u l-qadhdhaafiyy-u</i>	العقيدُ القذافيُّ

2.1.2 Reduced relative clauses

In this form of apposition, the specifying noun is equivalent to a relative noun phrase:

¹⁴ The term *badal* (literally, ‘substitution; exchange’) is used in traditional Arabic grammar to describe more than the noun-noun appositional relationship. It also covers the use of the demonstrative pronoun in demonstrative phrases, and modifying adjectives. In this section of the reference grammar, however, the discussion of *badal* is restricted to appositional structures that include nouns and personal pronouns. For a detailed discussion of apposition see Wright 1967, II: 272ff. Cachia (1973) gives the terms *tab'* or *tab'iyya* for ‘apposition,’ and Hasan (1987) refers to nouns in apposition as *tawaabi'* (literally: ‘followers’).

بين نواب أعضاء في الحزب الوطني

bayn-a nuwwaab-in ʔaʕDaaʔ-in fii l-Hizb-i l-waTaniyy-i

among deputies [who are] members of the national party

ستطالب الدول الأعضاء بقطع هذه العلاقات.

sa-tu-Taalib-u l-duwal-a l-ʔaʕDaaʔ-a bi-qaTʕ-i haadhihi l-ʕalaqaat-i.

It will demand the member states sever these relations.

2.1.3 Apposition for specification

In more general terms, the noun or nouns in apposition further specify the head noun:

from the mother company	<i>min-a l-sharikat-i l-ʔumm-i</i>	من الشركة الأم
in the sister [country] Jordan	<i>fii l-ʔurdunn-i l-shaqiiq-i</i>	في الأردن الشقيق
my friend, Amira	<i>Sadiiqat-ii ʔamiirat-u</i>	صديقتي أميرة
the creator god	<i>al-rabb-u l-xaaliq-u</i>	الرب الخالق
She carried her brother Samir.	<i>Hamal-at ʔax-aa-haa samiir-an.</i>	حملت أباها سميراً.
today, Sunday	<i>al-yawm-a l-ʔaHad-a</i>	اليوم الأحد
the guest minister	<i>al-waziir-u l-Dayf-u</i>	الوزير الضيف
في العاصمة الأردنية عمان	<i>fii l-ʕaaSimat-i l-ʔurdunniyaat-i ʕammaan-a</i>	معرض الفنانين الشباب
in the Jordanian capital, Amman	<i>l-shabaab-i</i>	<i>maʕraD-u l-fannaan-iina</i>
		the exhibit of young artists
		(‘artists youths’)

2.2 Accusative Apposition

A noun in apposition to a pronoun is put into the accusative case because it specifies that noun in a particular way and is considered a form of *tamyiz* or accusative of specification.

When an independent pronoun (often the first person plural) is further specified, the specifying noun is in the accusative case as the object of an understood verb such as *ʔaʕnii* ‘I mean,’ or *ʔaxuSS-u* ‘I specify.’

we, the Arabs	<i>naHnu l-ʕarab-a</i>	نحن العرب
we, the people of the Gulf	<i>naHnu l-xaliijiyy-iina</i>	نحن الخليجيين
we, the Americans	<i>naHnu l-ʔamriikiyy-iina</i>	نحن الأمريكيين

2.3 Appositive specification of quantity or identity

Arabic nouns may be further specified by other nouns in terms of quantity or identity. In most of these cases, the specifying noun agrees in case with the head noun and carries a personal pronoun suffix referring back to the head noun. The pronoun agrees with the head noun in number and gender. Quantity nouns such as *kull*, *jamii*^c, *ba*^cD, and fractions, as well as identity nouns such as *nafs* 'same; self' are used in these expressions.¹⁵

ضحك الطلاب جميعهم

DaHik-a l-Tullaab-u jamii^c-u-hum

all the students laughed

('the students, all of them')

الشعب كله

al-sha^c-b-u kull-u-hu

all the people

('the people, all of them')

على دول المنطقة كلها

^calaa duwal-i l-minTaqaat-i kull-i-haa

on all the states of the region

('the states of the region, all of them')

في الوقت نفسه

fii l-waqt-i nafs-i-hi

at the same time

بالأسلوب نفسه

bi-l-³usluub-i nafs-i-hi

in the same way

بالسرعة نفسها

bi-l-sur^c-at-i nafs-i-haa

at the same speed

بين العرب أنفسهم كقيسيين ويمنيين

bayn-a l-^carab-i ³anfus-i-him ka-qaysiyy-iina wa-yamaniyy-iina

among the Arabs themselves like the Qays and the Yamanis

2.3.1 Quantifier noun *'idda* (عدة)

The noun *'idda* 'several' is often used in apposition with a head noun. It does not carry a pronoun suffix. It agrees with the noun in case.

in several cities

fii mudun-in 'iddat-in

في مدن عدة

in several regions

fii manaaTiq-a 'iddat-in

في مناطق عدة

in several languages

bi-lughaat-in 'iddat-in

بلغات عدة

several years ago

mundhu sanawaat-in 'iddat-in

منذ سنوات عدة

وهناك سيدات عدة برزن في هذا المجال.

wa-hunaaka sayyidaat-un 'iddat-un baraz-na fii haadhaa l-majaal-i.

There are several women who have become eminent in this field.

¹⁵ This is an alternative structure to using the quantifying nouns as the first term of an *'iDaafa*, e.g., *kull-u l-wuzaraa³-i* 'all the ministers' versus *al-wuzaraa³-u kull-u-hum*, or *nafs-u l-fikrat-i* 'the same idea' versus *al-fikrat-u nafs-u-haa*.

2.4 Relative pronoun *maa* in apposition

The indefinite relative pronoun *maa* can be used in apposition with a noun to indicate 'a certain,' or 'some.'

in a certain place	<i>fii makaan-in maa</i>	في مكانٍ ما
some day	<i>yawm-an maa</i>	يوماً ما
somewhat; to a certain extent	<i>naw^c-an maa</i>	نوعاً ما
لماذا تحب كاتباً ما؟ <i>li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u kaatib-an maa?</i>	بعد فتح بلد ما <i>ba^cd-a fatH-i balad-in maa</i>	
Why do you like a certain writer?	after conquering a certain country	

Noun specifiers and quantifiers

Certain Arabic nouns act primarily as specifiers or determiners for other nouns. They may be used as first terms of construct phrases, in apposition with nouns, with pronouns, or independently. Many of these nouns express **quantities**; some express other kinds of specification.

Here are five major classes of specifiers and quantifiers in MSA.

1 Expressions of totality

1.1 *kull* كل 'all; every; the whole'

1.1.1 "Each, every"

When used as the first term of a construct phrase with a **singular, indefinite noun**, *kull* has the meaning of 'each' or 'every.'¹

everything *kull-u shay'in* كل شيء every one *kull-u waaHid-in* كل واحد
every day *kull-a yawm-in* كل يوم

لكل مستخدم <i>li-kull-i mustaxdim-in</i> for every user	كل ريال من دخلنا <i>kull-u riyaa-in min daxl-i-naa</i> every riyal of our income	لكل فنان عربي <i>li-kull-i fannaan-in 'arabiyy-in</i> for every Arab artist
---	--	---

1.1.2 "all, the whole"

When used with a **definite singular noun or a pronoun**, *kull* has the meaning of 'all of,' 'the whole,' or 'all.'

كل المساعدة الممكنة <i>kull-u l-musaa'adat-i l-mumkinat-i</i> all possible aid	كل هذا <i>kull-u haadhaa</i> all of this/that
--	---

¹ LeTourneau (1995, 30) refers to constructs with quantifiers as the first term as a "quantified construct state."

1.1.3 “all”

When used with a **definite plural noun**, *kull* means ‘all.’

في كل الظروف

fii kull-i l-Zuruuf-i

in all circumstances

مع كل قضايا الشرق الأوسط

ma^ca kull-i qaDaayaa l-sharq-i l-³awsaT-i

with all the problems of the Middle East

بهدف حل كل المشاكل

bi-hadaF-i Hall-i kull-i l-mashaakil-i

with the aim of solving all the problems

1.1.4 *kull-un min* كل من ‘each; both; every one of’

The noun *kull* may be used as an indefinite noun with nunation, **followed by the preposition *min* ‘of’** to convey the meaning of totality. When there are only two items, the phrase *kull min* functions as the equivalent of ‘both.’

في كل من واشنطن وعمان بالتناوب

fii kull-in min waashinTun wa-^cammaan-a bi-l-tanaawub-i

in both Washington and Amman, alternately

في كل من الحلقات قصة جديدة.

fii kull-in min-a l-Halaqaat-i qiSSat-un

jadiidat-un.

In each installment is a new story.

في كل من فرنسا والجزائر

fii kull-in min faransaa wa-l-jazaa³ir-i

in both France and Algeria

1.1.5 *kull-un* الكل ‘everyone’

The noun *kull* may be used alone to express the idea of ‘everyone.’ It may occur with or without the definite article. Agreement is masculine singular.

كل يريد أن يلتقط صوراً هناك.

kull-un yu-riid-u ³an ya-ltaqiT-a Suwar-an hunaaka.

Everyone wants to take pictures there.

1.2 *jamii^c* جميع ‘all’

The word *jamii^c* is used with a **following genitive noun (usually plural)** to mean ‘all,’ or ‘the totality of.’

تطبيق جميع قرارات مجلس الأمن

taTbiq-u jamii^c-i qaraaraat-i majlis-i l-³amn-i

the application of all the decisions of the security council

طاوالت جميع أوجه المعرفة

Taawal-at jamii^c-a ³awjuh-i l-ma^crifat-i

it rivaled all aspects of knowledge

إلى جميع إخوانهم

³ilaa jamii^c-i ³ixwaan-i-him

to all their brothers

1.3 *kilaa~kilay/ kiltaa~kiltay* - كلتا - كلتي ~ كلا-كلي 'both; both of (m. & f.)'

The specialized dual quantifiers *kilaa/kilay* (m.) and *kiltaa/kiltay* (f.) are used to express the idea of 'both.' They are followed by a **definite dual noun in the genitive or by a dual pronoun suffix**. These two words inflect as does the dual suffix when it is the first term of a construct, but **they do not inflect for case when followed by a noun; only when followed by a pronoun**.

1.3.1 Masculine

both of the delegations	<i>kilaa l-waf'd-ayni</i>	كلا الوفدين
in both worlds	<i>fii kilaa l-ʿaalam-ayni</i>	في كلا العالمين
with both of them (m.)	<i>ma-ʿa kilay-himaa</i>	مع كليهما

1.3.2 Feminine

during both of the periods	<i>fii kiltaa l-fatrat-ayni</i>	في كلتا الفترتين
in both cases	<i>fii kiltaa l-Haalat-ayni</i>	في كلتا الحالتين
with both his hands	<i>bi-kiltaa yad-ay-hi</i>	بكلتا يديه
Both of them (f.) are affixes.	<i>kiltaa-humaa zaaʿidat-aani.</i>	كلتاهما زائدتان.
by both of them (f.)	<i>bi-kiltay-himaa</i>	بكلتيهما

1.4 *kaaffa* كافة 'totality; all'

The noun *kaaffa* is used as the first term of a construct phrase to express totality:

كافة اتجاهاتها	كافة شؤون الوزارة
<i>kaaffat-u ttijaahaat-i-haa</i>	<i>kaaffat-u shuʿuun-i l-wizaarat-i</i>
all of its inclinations	all the affairs of the ministry

وجه التهنئة إلى كافة أفراد البعثة.

wajjah-a l-tahniʿat-a ʿilaa kaaffat-i ʿafraad-i l-biʿthat-i.

He directed congratulations to **all the members** of the delegation.

تتوفر كافة الخدمات الأساسية.

ta-tawaffar-u kaaffat-u l-xidamaat-i l-ʿasaasiyyat-i.

All the basic services are provided.

2 Expressions of limited number, non-specific number, or partiality

There are several ways to express partial inclusion in Arabic.

2.1 *ba*°D بعض 'some,' 'some of'

The masculine singular noun *ba*°D is followed by a singular or plural noun in the genitive or by a pronoun suffix. It may also be used independently.

2.1.1 As first term of a construct

The quantifier *ba*°D is usually followed by a definite noun in the genitive case. Note that adjectives that follow the construct normally agree in gender and number with the second term, the noun being quantified.

بعض الجمعيات الخيرية
ba°D-u l-jam°iyyaat-i l-xayriyyat-i
some of the charitable associations

إعادة إخراج بعض الأفلام
°i°aadat-u °ixraaj-i *ba*°D-i l-°aflaam-i
the re-release of some films

نجحوا بعض الشيء.
najaH-uu ba°D-a l-shay°-i.
They succeeded somewhat.

2.1.2 With pronoun suffix

The noun *ba*°D may also take a pronoun suffix.

يرى بعضهم في ذلك خطأ.
ya-raa ba°D-u-hum fii dhaalika xaTa°-an.
Some of them see in that a mistake.

2.1.3 Reciprocal بعض: Double use of *ba*°D

The concept of "each other" or "together" may be expressed with the use of *ba*°D as a reciprocal pronoun. The first *ba*°D has a pronoun suffix; the second has either the definite article or nunation.

هم يسألون بعضهم البعض.
hum ya-s°al-uuna ba°D-u-hum-u l-*ba*°D-a.
They are asking each other.

تعيش مع بعضها البعض.
ta-°iish-u ma°-a *ba*°D-i-haa l-*ba*°D-u.
They live all together.

وقوف اللاعبين بعضهم فوق البعض
wuquuf-u l-laa°ib-iina ba°D-u-hum fawq-a l-*ba*°D-i
the acrobats standing on top of each other

وعلى المواطنين أن يعرفوا بعضهم بعضا معرفة جيدة.
wa-°alaa l-muwaaTin-iina °an ya-°rif-uu ba°D-u-hum *ba*°D-an ma°rifat-an jayyidat-an.
It is necessary for citizens to know each other well.

أعتقد أنهما منفصلان كثيرا عن بعضهما بعضا.
°a°taqid-u °anna-humaa munfaSil-aani kathiir-an °an *ba*°D-i-himaa *ba*°D-an.
I think that they (two) are very separate from each other.

2.2 *biD^c* بضع and *biD^ca* بضعة 'a few,' 'several'

This term is used in the **masculine with feminine nouns** and in the **feminine with masculine nouns**, reflecting gender polarity similar to that of the numeral system. The following noun is in the genitive plural. The nouns specified by *biD^c* and *biD^ca* are often numerals or terms of measurement:

2.2.1 With masculine noun

يتطلب بضعة أسابيع.
ya-taTallab-u biD^cat-a 'asaabii^c-a.
 It requires several weeks.

بعد بضعة أيام
ba^cd-a biD^cat-i 'ayyaam-in
 after a few days

2.2.2 With feminine noun

أكثر من بضع مئات الأمثلة
'akthar-u min biD^c-i mi'aat-i l-'amthilat-i
 more than several hundred examples

بعد بضع دقائق
ba^cd-a biD^c-i daqaa' iq-a
 in a few minutes

يلقى على بضع مئات الأصوات.
yu-'alliq-u 'alaa biD^c-i mi'aat-i l-'aSwaat-i.
 It hangs on several hundred votes.

أكثر من بضع ثوان
'akthar-u min biD^c-i thawaan-in
 more than a few seconds

2.3 *'idda* عدة 'several'

This noun is used in two ways: either as the first part of a construct phrase or as a noun in apposition with the noun it specifies.

2.3.1 As first term of construct

امتهن أهل المدينة عدة مهن.
imtahan-a 'ahl-u l-madiinat-i 'iddat-a mihan-in.
 The people of the city practiced several trades.

جاء هؤلاء المربون من عدة دول عربية.
jaa^a-a haa'ulaa' i l-murabb-uuna min 'iddat-i duwal-in 'arabiyyat-in.
 These educators came from several Arab countries.

2.3.2 In apposition with a noun

When *'idda* is in apposition with a noun, it carries the same case as the noun.

في مدن عدة
fii mudun-in 'iddat-in
 in various cities

في مناطق عدة
fii manaaTiq-a 'iddat-in
 in several regions

فهناك روايات عدة عما حدث.

fa-hunaaka riwaayaat-un 'iddat-un 'ammaa Hadath-a.

There are several stories about what happened.

2.4 *shattaa* شَتَّى 'various, diverse; all kinds of'

This word, the plural of *shatiit* 'scattered; dispersed,' is used as the first term of an *'iDaafa*.

في شَتَّى أنحاء الأرض

fii shattaa 'anHaa'i l-'arD-i

in various parts of the earth

2.5 *muxtalif* مختلف 'various; several'

This active participle of Form VIII (literally 'differing') is often used as the first term of an *'iDaafa* to mean 'various' or 'different.'

من مختلف أنحاء الولاية

min muxtalif-i 'anHaa'i l-wilaayat-i

from various parts of the state

في مختلف المدن

fii muxtalif-i l-mudun-i

in various cities

2.6 *'adad-un min* عدد من 'a number of'

This is a widely used expression to denote a non-specific but significant number. Unlike other quantifiers, it is an indefinite noun followed by a preposition, so the noun that follows is the object of the preposition *min* 'of.'

دعوة عدد من الأساتذة والمربين العرب

da'wat-u 'adad-in min-a l-'asaatidhat-i wa-l-murabbiina l-'arab-i

the invitation of a number of Arab professors and educators

حضر الاجتماع عدد من الباحثين والمفكرين.

HaDar-a l-ijtima'a 'adad-un min-a l-baaHithiina wa-l-mufakkiriina.

A number of researchers and intellectuals attended the conference.

2.7 *kathiir-un min* كثير من and *al-kathiir-u min* الكثير من 'many'

To indicate a large but indefinite number, these phrases are used.

يتذكر كثير من الناس.

ya-tadhakkar-u kathiir-un min-a l-naas-i.

Many ('of the') people remember.

أمامنا الكثير من الفرص والكثير من التحديات.

'amaam-a-naa l-kathiir-u min-a l-furaS-i wa-l-kathiir-u min-a l-taHaddiyaat-i.

Before us are many opportunities and many challenges.

3 Expressions of “more,” “most,” and “majority”

Arabic uses several expressions to convey concepts of “more,” “most of,” or “the majority of.”

3.1 “More”

When discussing the concept of “more,” there are two sides to it: a **quality** can be greater in intensity, which is expressed by the comparative (or “relative”) form of the **adjective** (e.g., more important, more famous); this is discussed in Chapter 10, sections 4.2.1–4.2.3.

However, there is also another use of “more” to mean “more of something,” “a greater quantity/amount of something” where the “more” expression is followed by a **noun or noun phrase**. In contemporary Arabic the phrase *al-maziid min* المزيد من (literally ‘the increase of’) is often used to express this concept of “more of.”

للمزيد من الأراضي الزراعية

li-l-maziid-i min-a l-ʔaraadii l-ziraaʔiyyat-i

for more agricultural lands

لتحقيق المزيد من الإنجازات في جميع القطاعات

li-taHqiiq-i l-maziid-i min-a l-ʔinjaazaat-i fii jamiiʕ-i l-qiTaaʕaat-i

to realize more production in all sectors

تعهدت بتقديم المزيد من الأموال للبنوك.

taʕahhad-at bi-taqdiim-i l-maziid-i min-a l-ʔamwaal-i li-l-bunuuk-i.

It pledged support for more money for banks.

3.2 ‘Most of’: *muʕZam* معظم and *ʔakthar* أكثر

3.2.1 *muʕZam*

The expression ‘most of’ is often accomplished with the word *muʕZam* as the first term of an *ʔiDaafa*:

معظم السفارات العربية

muʕZam-u l-sifaaraat-i ʕarabiyyat-i

most of the Arab embassies

حصل على معظم المقاعد.

HaSal-a ʕalaa muʕZam-i l-maqaaʕid-i.

It obtained most of the seats.

في معظم القسم الثاني من الكتاب

fii muʕZam-i l-qism-i l-thaanii min-a l-kitaab-i

in most of the second part of the book

3.2.2 *ʔakthar* أكثر ‘more; most’

The relative adjective *ʔakthar* ‘more; most’ may also be used to express ‘most’ as first term of an *ʔiDaafa*. The following noun is definite, may be singular or plural, and is in the genitive case.

أكثر الوقت	أكثر المواطنين	أكثر الناس
<i>ʾakthar-u l-waqt-i</i>	<i>ʾakthar-u l-muwaaTin-iina</i>	<i>ʾakthar-u l-naas-i</i>
most of the time	most of the citizens	most people

3.3 Expression of “majority”

The Arabic superlative adjective *ʾaghlab*, the derived noun *ʾaghlabiyya*, or the active participle *ghaalib* are all used to express the concept of “majority.”

أغلبهم ليس مؤرخا.

ʾaghlab-u-hum lays-a muʾarrix-an.

The majority of them are not historians.

4 Scope of quantifier agreement

The scope of agreement or concord refers to agreement patterns that apply to “quantified construct states.”² Agreement or concord is normally shown through adjectives and/or verbs.

Patterns of agreement with quantified construct states can vary in MSA and the phenomenon has been studied by both Parkinson and LeTourneau. As LeTourneau remarks (1995, 30), “a verb may agree in number and gender with either the quantifier (invariantly masculine singular) or with its complement.”

Parkinson’s findings (as paraphrased by LeTourneau 1995, 31) reveal that “certain grammatical features on the second term in the QCS [quantified construct state] license only one agreement option. Thus, if the second term to *kull* is either an indefinite feminine singular or a definite plural, the verb must agree with the second term (logical agreement, in traditional terms); if *baʿD* has a pronominal suffix and the verb follows, agreement with the quantifier (grammatical agreement) is mandatory (Parkinson 1975, 66).”

4.1 Agreement with quantifier

In conformity with the above-stated rule, the agreement is with the quantifier when it has a pronoun suffix (such as *baʿD* or *ʾaghlab*).

أغلبهم ليس مؤرخا.

ʾaghlab-u-hum lays-a muʾarrix-an.

The majority of them are not historians (‘is not a historian’).

4.2 Agreement with specified noun

The agreement may be with the noun that is the second term of the *ʾiDaafa*. This occurs especially with adjectives that immediately follow the noun.

² LeTourneau, 1995, 30. In this article, “Internal and external agreement in quantified construct states,” LeTourneau provides detailed analysis on this topic. See also Parkinson 1975 on the agreement of *baʿD* and *kull*.

تهم كل عربي مقيم في البلد

ta-humm-u kull-a ʿarabiyy-in muqim-in fii l-balad-i

it concerns every Arab residing in the country

بعض المثقفين العرب

baʿD-u l-muthaqqaf-iina l-ʿarab-i

some of the Arab cultured elite

يحملون كل الوثائق المطلوبة.

ya-Hmil-uuna kull-a l-wathaaʿiq-i l-maThuubat-i.

They are carrying all the requested documents.

كل الاحتمالات ممكنة.

kull-u l-iHtimaalaat-i mumkinat-un.

All probabilities are possible.

كل المحاولات التي بذلت

kull-u l-muHaawalaat-i llatii budhil-at

all the attempts that were made

4.3 Ambiguous agreement

Sometimes the agreement is ambiguous, as in the following example.

كل طرف يحاول أن ينتزع أفضل شروط.

kull-u Taraf-in yu-Haawil-u ʿan ya-ntazi-ʿa ʿafDal-a shuruuT-in.

Every party tries to obtain the best conditions.

4.4 Mixing of number agreement

In the following sentences using *baʿD*, the adjective following the plural noun is plural, but the verb is third person masculine singular, in agreement with the quantifier.

بعض النقاد الأمريكيين يعتقد أن...

baʿD-u l-nuqqaad-i l-ʿamriikiyy-iina ya-ʿtaqid-u ʿanna. . . .

some American critics believe ('believes') that . . .

In practice, the verb may optionally agree with the second term of the construct (*nuqqaad*):³

بعض النقاد الأمريكيين يعتقدون أن...

baʿD-u l-nuqqaad-i l-ʿamriikiyy-iina ya-ʿtaqid-uuna ʿanna. . . .

some American critics believe (m. pl.) that . . .

5 Non-quantitative specifiers

5.1 Expression of identity or reflexivity

5.1.1 *nafs* 'same; self'

To express the concept of "the same" Arabic uses the word *nafs* (pl. *ʿanfus* ~ *nufuus*), either as the first term of an *ʿiDaafa*, or in apposition with the modified

³ As my colleague Amin Bonnah states, the usage here depends on "a mix of grammar, style, logic, and meaning" (personal communication).

noun. Note that this word has several meanings: ‘self,’ ‘same,’ ‘spirit~soul,’ and ‘breath.’ See also its use as an appositive specifier in chapter 8, section 2.3.

5.1.1.1 IN ^ʔiDaafa

تعمل جميعها على نفس المنوال.

ta-ʿmal-u jamii-ʿu-haa ʿalaa nafs-i l-minwaal-i.

They all work the same way.

5.1.1.2 IN APPOSITION

يردد العبارة نفسها.

yu-raddid-u l-ʿibaaarat-a nafs-a-haa.

He repeats the same expression.

5.1.2 *dhaatiyy* ذاتي ‘self’⁴

In certain expressions the term *dhaatiyy* is used to delineate the concept of self, e.g.,

النقد الذاتي

al-naqd-u l-dhaatiyy-u

self-criticism

5.2 Expression of ‘any; whichever’ ^ʔayy/ ^ʔayya أية / أي + noun

The noun ^ʔayy is used as the first term of an ^ʔiDaafa to express the concept of “any” or “whichever.” If the noun following ^ʔayy أي is feminine, ^ʔayy may shift to ^ʔayya أياً, but this does not always happen. The noun following ^ʔayy is **indefinite and in the genitive case**. It is normally singular, but is sometimes plural.

5.2.1 Masculine form of ^ʔayy + noun

5.2.1.1 ^ʔayy + MASCULINE SINGULAR NOUN

يعارضون أي تدخل

yu-ʿaariD-uuna ʿayy-a tadaxxul-in

they oppose any intervention

لدي القدرة على عمل أي شيء.

laday-ya l-quadrat-u ʿalaa ʿamal-i ʿayy-i shayʿ-in.

I have the ability to do anything.

مثل أي شعب آخر

mithl-a ayy-i shaʿb-in ʿaaxar-a

like any other people

من أي مكان تقريبا

min ʿayy-i makaan-in taqriib-an

from almost any place

⁴ For more on the pronoun *dhaat* and its usage, see Chapter 12, section 4.

5.2.1.2 'ayy + FEMININE SINGULAR NOUN:

لأي دولة

li-'ayy-i dawlat-in

for any state

لأي محاولة

li-'ayy-i muHaawalat-in

for any attempt

في حالة أي شكوى

fii Haalat-i 'ayy-i shakwaa

in case of any complaint

اسأل عن معنى أي كلمة.

is'al'an ma'naa 'ayy-i kalimat-in.

Ask about the meaning of any word.

5.2.2 Feminine 'ayya + noun

When the noun being specified is feminine, the feminine form, 'ayya may be used:

في أية قائمة لأكابر علماء الدنيا

fii 'ayyat-i qaa'imat-in li-'akaabir-i 'ulamaa-i l-dunyaa

on any list of the greatest scholars in the world

لن يجدوا أية مشاكل.

lan ya-jid-uu 'ayyat-a mashaakil-a

They will not find any problems.

5.2.3 'ayy as independent noun

The noun 'ayy may be used independently to mean 'anything,' 'whatever,' or 'any-one.' When used with a dual noun, it indicates 'either one of'; it is normally indefinite and takes nunation.

أيًا كان لونها

'ayy-an kaan-a lawn-u-haa

whatever its color is

أي من المرشحين

'ayy-un min-a l-murashshaH-ayni

either one of the (two) candidates

5.2.3.1 'ayy WITH NEGATIVE AS 'NONE': With a negative verb, 'ayy carries the sense of 'none':

لم يستطع أي منها.

lam ya-staTi' 'ayy-un min-haa.

None of them could.

Adjectives: function and form

This chapter is in two parts. The first part deals with function: adjectives in context and issues such as agreement, word order, and inflection, including inflection for comparative and superlative. The second part focuses on the derivational morphology or word structure of adjectives.

Part one: Function

1 Attributive adjectives

An attributive adjective is part of a noun phrase and follows the noun directly, agreeing with it in gender, number, case, and definiteness:

البحر الأحمر
al-baHr-u l-ʿaHmar-u
the Red Sea

القومية العربية
al-qawmiyyat-u l-ʿarabiyyat-u
Arab nationalism

الرياضيون العرب
al-riyaaDiyy-uuna l-ʿarab-u
Arab athletes

الهلال الخصيب
al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u
the Fertile Crescent

فوز سهل
fawz-un sahl-un
an easy win

في دور سياسي
fii dawr-in siyaasiyy-in
in a political role

1.1 Attributive adjective modifying noun + pronoun suffix

A noun with a pronoun suffix is considered definite; therefore, an adjective that modifies that noun carries the definite article, in addition to agreeing in gender, case, and number with the noun:

في بيئاتها الطبيعية
fii biiʾaat-i-haa l-Tabiiʿiyyat-i
in their natural environments

هويته الثقافية
huwiyyat-u-hu l-thaqaafiyyat-u
its cultural identity

لدعم مرشحيهم المحليين

li-da^cm-i murashshaH-ii-him-i l-maHalliyy-iina

to support their local candidates

في تاريخ فكرنا العربي

fii taariix-i fikr-i-naa l-^carabiyy-i

in the history of our Arab thought

2 Predicate adjectives

A predicate adjective is used in an equational (verbless) sentence to provide information about the subject of the sentence, thus completing the clause. In an Arabic equational sentence, there is usually no overt copula, or present tense form of the verb “to be,” linking the subject and predicate. When acting as a predicate, the adjective agrees with the noun or pronoun subject in gender and number. It is usually in the nominative case. However, it does not normally take the definite article because it is predicating a quality or attribute to the subject.

الحصاد وفير.

al-HiSaad-u wafiir-un.

The harvest is **abundant** (‘is an abundant one’).

القائمة طويلة.

al-qaa’imat-u Tawiilat-un.

The list is **long** (‘is a long one’).

الكرز أحمر.

al-karaz-u ^aHmar-u.

Cherries are **red**.

القصة ظريفة.

al-qiSSat-u Zariifat-un.

The story is **charming**.

هي ذكية.

hiya dhakiyyat-un.

She is **intelligent**.

أنا محظوظة.

^aanaa maHZuuZat-un.

I am **fortunate**.

نحن بعيدون عن ذلك.

naHnu ba^ciid-uuna ^can dhaalika.

We are **far** from that.

3 Adjectives as substantives

Adjectives may serve as substantives or noun substitutes, just as they sometimes do in English:

حيث القديم يختلط مع الجديد.

Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma^c-a l-jadiid-i.

Where **the old** mixes with **the new**.

نزل الكبار والصغار إلى الشوارع.

nazal-a l-kibaar-u wa-l-Sighaar-u ^ailaa l-shawaari^c-i.

The adults and children (‘**the big and the little**’) descended into the streets.

بالنسبة إلى الكثيرين <i>bi-l-nisbat-i ʔilaa l-kathiiir-iina</i> according to many	نال الفضيّة. <i>naal-a l-fiDDiyyat-a.</i> He won ('obtained') the silver [medal].
قليلون من الباحثين <i>qaliil-uuna min-a l-baaHith-iina</i> few of the researchers	اجتماع كبار المسؤولين <i>ijtimaaʕ-u kibaar-i l-masʕuul-iina</i> the meeting of senior officials

4 Arabic adjective inflection

Adjectives in Arabic inflect for four morphological categories: **gender, number, case, and definiteness**. Many of them also inflect for a fifth category: **degree** (comparative and superlative).

As far as the first four categories are concerned, adjectives mirror the inflectional categories of the nouns that they modify, that is, they **agree** or are in **concord** with those nouns. In most cases the agreement or concord is direct or "strict," meaning that the adjective reflects exactly the categories of the noun.¹

As noted above, Arabic adjectives normally follow the nouns they modify.

4.1 Inflectional categories: gender, number, case, definiteness

Much like nouns, Arabic adjectives have a base form, which is the singular masculine, and an inflected (marked) form for the feminine, usually marked by *taaʕ marbuuTa*. They also inflect for dual, and for plural. In the plural, they take broken or sound plural forms, or both.

In terms of case inflection, adjectives fall into the same declensions as nouns, depending on their morphological form (their lexical root and pattern structure).

4.1.1 Masculine singular adjectives

Masculine singular adjectives modify masculine singular nouns.

طقس غائم <i>Taqs-un ghaaʕim-un</i> cloudy weather	في الوقت المناسب <i>fii l-waqt-i l-munaasib-i</i> at the proper time
الاحترام المتبادل <i>al-iHtiraam-u l-mutabaadal-u</i> mutual respect	المفتش العام <i>al-mufattish-u l-ʕaamm-u</i> the inspector general

¹ Adjectives in general are referred to in morphological theory as "targets" rather than "controllers." That is, they are targets of the agreement requirements of nouns. As Carstairs-McCarthy (1994, 769) states: "Adjectives are gender targets, i.e., they must agree with nouns in gender as well as number and case."

البحر الأبيض المتوسطّ

al-baHr-u l-ʔabyaD-u l-mutawassiT-u

the Mediterranean Sea ('the middle white sea')

السلك الدبلوماسي العربي والأجنبيّ

al-silk-u l-dibluumaasiyy-u l-ʿarabiyy-u wa-l-ʔajnaḃiyy-u

the Arab and foreign diplomatic corps

4.1.2 Masculine dual adjectives

Masculine dual adjectives modify masculine dual nouns.

في مجلّدين كبيرين

fii mujallad-ayni kabiir-ayni

in two large volumes

بين البلدين العربيّين

bayn-a l-balad-ayni l-ʿarabiyy-ayni

between the two Arab countries

4.1.3 Masculine plural adjectives

Masculine plural adjectives modify masculine plural nouns **only if the nouns refer to human beings**.

المماليك المصريون

al-mamaaliik-u l-miSriyy-uuna

the Egyptian Mamelukes

زوّار رسميّون

zuwwaar-un rasmiyy-uuna

official visitors

خبراء نفطيّون

xubraraaʔ-u nifTiyy-uuna

oil experts

من الفنّانين اليونانيّين

min-a l-fannaan-iina l-yuunaaniyy-iina

from the Greek artists

الأمراء الروس الآخرون

al-ʔumaraaʔ-u l-ruus-u l-ʔaaxar-uuna

the other Russian princes

تسعة أشخاص جدد

tisʿat-u ʔashxaas-in judud-in²

nine new persons

4.1.4 Feminine singular adjectives

The feminine singular adjective is used to modify **feminine singular nouns** and **also for nonhuman plural nouns**. The use of the feminine singular to modify nonhuman plural nouns is referred to as “deflected” agreement rather than “strict” agreement.

² Note that when numerals are used for counting over ten, the counted noun is grammatically singular and any agreeing adjective is also singular, although the meaning is plural. For example:

عشرون مهندساً جديداً

ʿishruuna muhandis-an jadiid-an

twenty new engineers

4.1.4.1 WITH FEMININE SINGULAR NOUNS:

الحكاية القديمة <i>al-Hikaayat-u l-qadiimat-u</i> the old story	نصيحة مجانية <i>naSiiHat-un majjaaniyyat-un</i> free advice
المرّة القادمة <i>al-marrat-a l-qaadimat-a</i> the next time	الجبهة الإسلامية القومية الحاكمة <i>al-jabhat-u l-³islaamiyyat-u l-qawmiyyat-u</i> <i>l-Haakimat-u</i> the ruling national Islamic front

4.1.4.2 WITH NONHUMAN PLURAL NOUNS: “DEFLECTED” AGREEMENT

Nonhuman plural nouns require feminine singular agreement.³ Case and definiteness are in strict agreement.

الأمم المتّحدة <i>al-³umam-u l-muttaHidat-u</i> the United Nations	الولايات المتّحدة <i>al-wilaayaat-u l-muttahidat-u</i> the United States
نتائج أوليّة <i>nataa³ij-u ³awwaliyyat-un</i> preliminary results	ثلاث أفكار رئيسيّة <i>talaath-u ³afkaar-in ra³iisiyyat-in</i> three main ideas
التقاليد المسيحيّة <i>al-taqaaliid-u l-masiiHiyyat-u</i> the Christian traditions	القوات المسلّحة <i>al-quwwaat-u l-musallaHat-u</i> the armed forces

4.1.5 Feminine dual adjectives

Feminine dual nouns are modified by feminine dual adjectives.

سفينتان كبيرتان <i>safiinat-aani kabiirat-aani</i> two big ships	خلال السنتين الماضيتين <i>xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maaDiyat-ayni</i> during the last two years
المدينتان الأخريان <i>al-madiinat-aani l-³uxray-aani</i> the other two cities	الدولتان العظميان <i>al-dawlat-aani l-³uZmaay-aani</i> the two super powers ('states')

4.1.6 Feminine plural adjectives

Feminine plural adjectives modify feminine plural nouns only if the nouns refer to human beings:

³ See the article by Belnap and Shabeneh 1992 for discussion of the history and nature of deflected agreement in Arabic.

نساء عربيات
nisaa' -un *arabiyyaat-un*
Arab women

من سيدات مسنات
min sayyidaat-in *musinnaat-in*
from old ladies

من النساء المعجبات
min-a l-nisaa' -i l-mu' *jibaat-i*
from the admiring women

النساء المتقدمات في السن
al-nisaa' -u l-mutaqaddimaat-u fii l-sinn-i
women of advanced age ('women advanced in age')

الفتايات العاملات في هذا المجال
al-fataayaat-u l-*aamilaat-u* fii haadhaa l-majaal-i
the young women working in this field

4.1.7 Non-gendered adjectives

There are a limited number of adjectives in MSA that do not inflect for gender. They remain in the masculine singular base form.⁴

4.1.4.1 THE ADJECTIVE *xaam* 'RAW':

مادة خام
maaddat-un *xaam-un*
raw material

المواد الخام
al-mawaadd-u l-*xaam-u*
the raw materials

4.1.4.2 THE ADJECTIVE *maHD* 'PURE' (WITH EXCEPTIONS):⁵

لغة عربية محض
lughat-un *arabiyyat-un maHD-un*
pure Arabic language

4.1.4.3 CERTAIN ADJECTIVES THAT APPLY STRICTLY TO FEMALE ANATOMY, SUCH AS "PREGNANT":

إمرأة حامل
imra'at-un *Haamil-un*
a pregnant woman

4.2 Adjective inflection for comparative and superlative (*ism al-tafDiil* اسم التفضيل)

The comparative and superlative forms of adjectives in Arabic are sometimes referred to together in grammatical descriptions of Arabic as "elative" forms

⁴ For an interesting discussion of discrepancies in gender agreement in the Qur'ân, see Gaballa 1999.

⁵ Wehr (1979, 1050) describes the adjective *maHD* as "invariable for gender and number," but I found it at least once in the feminine, in Hasan (1987, III:1) in his description of the types of *iDaafa* as *maHDat-un wa-hayr-u maHDat-in* 'pure and non-pure.'

because they signify a more intense degree of the quality described by the adjective.⁶ The Arabic term *ism al-tafDiil* signifies that these are terms of preference, pre-eminence, or preferment. In this text, the more standard terms “comparative” and “superlative” are used to refer to these forms of adjectives.

Just as English has sequences such as *large, larger, largest*, or *nice, nicer, nicest*, to indicate increasing degrees of intensity, Arabic has equivalent sequences consisting of base form, comparative, and superlative forms.

4.2.1 Comparative adjective: *ʾafʿal* أَفْعَل

Arabic adjectives derived from Form I trilateral roots inflect from the comparative through a pattern shift. No matter what the original or base pattern of the adjective, the comparative pattern shifts to *ʾaCCaC* (*ʾafʿal* أَفْعَل), and it is diptote. That is, it does not take nunation or *kasra* in its indefinite form.⁷ Note also that the initial *hamza* of this pattern is *hamzat al-qaTʿ*, that is, it does not elide. It is stable.

4.2.1.1 REGULAR TRILITERAL ROOTS

صغير	أصغر	بعيد	أبعد
<i>Saghiir</i>	<i>ʾaSghar</i>	<i>baʿiid</i>	<i>ʾabʿad</i>
small	smaller	far	farther
كثير	أكثر	حسن	أحسن
<i>kathiir</i>	<i>ʾakthar</i>	<i>Hasan</i>	<i>ʾaHsan</i>
many	more	good	better
كبير	أكبر	ثقل	أثقل
<i>kabiir</i>	<i>ʾakbar</i>	<i>thaqiil</i>	<i>ʾathqal</i>
big	bigger	heavy	heavier

4.2.1.2 HOLLOW ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from hollow roots, where the middle radical is either *waaw* or *yaaʾ*, behave as though the *waaw* or *yaaʾ* is a regular consonant:

طويل	أطول	جيد	أجيد
<i>Tawiil</i>	<i>ʾaTwal</i>	<i>jayyid</i>	<i>ʾajwad</i>
tall; long	taller; longer	good	better

⁶ See, for example, Abboud and McCarus 1983, part 1:340–45. Also Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 97 “L’élatif est un aspect de l’adjectif qui en exprime une valeur supérieure, complète, en une nuance souvent délicate à exprimer en français.”

⁷ For more on the diptote declension see Chapter 7, section 5.4.2.2.

طيب	أطيب	سَيِّء	أسوأ
<i>Tayyib</i>	<i>ʿaTyab</i>	<i>sayyiʿ</i>	<i>ʿaswaʿ</i>
good	better	bad	worse

4.2.1.3 ASSIMILATED ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from assimilated roots, where the initial root consonant is *waaw* or *yaaʿ*, keep that consonant:

واسع	أوسع	واضح	أوضح	وثيق	أوثق
<i>waasiʿ</i>	<i>ʿawsaʿ</i>	<i>waaDiH</i>	<i>ʿawDaH</i>	<i>wathiiq</i>	<i>ʿawthaq</i>
wide	wider	clear	clearer	firm	firmer

4.2.1.4 GEMINATE ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from geminate roots (where the second and third root consonants are the same) have a variant comparative form due to a rule which prevents a short vowel from occurring between two identical consonants. Thus instead of *ʿafʿal*, the form is *ʿafall* أَفَلَّ, and the two identical consonants are together, spelled with a *shadda*:

قليل	أقلّ	هامّ	أهمّ
<i>qaliil</i>	<i>ʿaqall</i>	<i>haamm</i>	<i>ʿahamm</i>
little; few	less; fewer	important	more important
جديد	أجدّد	حارّ	أحرّ
<i>jadiid</i>	<i>ʿajadd</i>	<i>Haarr</i>	<i>ʿaHarr</i>
new	newer	hot	hotter

4.2.1.5 DEFECTIVE ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from defective roots have the form *ʿafʿaa* أَفْعَى. The final root consonant (whether *waaw* or *yaaʿ*) becomes *ʿalif maqsuura*:

عالٍ	أعلى	غني	أغنى	قوي	أقوى
<i>ʿaalin</i>	<i>ʿaʿlaa</i>	<i>ghaniyy</i>	<i>ʿaghnaa</i>	<i>qawiyy</i>	<i>ʿaqwaa</i>
high	higher	rich	richer	strong	stronger
حلو	أحلى	ذكي	أذكى		
<i>Hilw</i>	<i>ʿaHlaa</i>	<i>dhakiyy</i>	<i>ʿadhkaa</i>		
sweet	sweeter	smart	smarter		

4.2.2 Inflection and use of comparative

Note that the Arabic comparative adjective does not show difference in gender. In fact, comparative adjectives do not inflect for gender or number or definiteness. They inflect only for case. When comparing two things and contrasting them, the preposition *min* is used the way ‘than’ is used in English.

4.2.2.1 CASE INFLECTION FOR COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVES: The comparative adjective falls into the diptote category and therefore shows only two different case markers in the indefinite form: *Damma* and *fatHa*.

أحسن ^{ʾaHsan} 'better'	
Nominative	أَحْسَنُ ^{ʾaHsan-u}
Genitive	أَحْسَنَ ^{ʾaHsan-a}
Accusative	أَحْسَنَ ^{ʾaHsan-a}

4.2.2.2 EXAMPLES OF COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVE IN CONTEXT:

تبدو أصغر من عمرها.
ta-bduu ʾaSghar-a min ʿumr-i-haa.

She appears **younger** than her age.

أكثر من خمس مئة دراسة علمية
ʾakthar-u min xams-i miʾat-i diraasat-in ʿilmiyyat-in
more than 500 scientific studies

أكثر من نصف الأنواع المعروفة
ʾakthar-u min niSf-i l-ʾanwaaʿ-i l-maʿruufat-i
more than half the known species

أهم مما سبقه
ʾahamm-u mimmaa sabaq-a-hu
more important than what preceded it

هذا أقل مما نحتاج إليه.
haadhaa ʾaqall-u mimmaa na-Htaaj-u ʾilay-hi.
This is **less** than we need.

تضم أكثر من سبع مئة مشهد.
ta-Dumm-u ʾakthar-a min sabʿ-i miʾat-i mashhad-in.
It contains **more** than 700 scenes.

4.2.2.3 COMPARATIVE WITHOUT *min*: Sometimes the comparative is used without reference to what it is compared to, so there is no need for the preposition *min*:

صارت تأخذ دوراً أكبر.

Saar-at ta'xudh-u dawr-an 'akbar-a.

She started to take a greater role.

إلى أفق أوسع وأرحب

'ilaa 'ufuq-in 'awsa'-a wa-'arHab-a

to a wider and more spacious horizon

سيؤدي إلى علاقة أوثق بينهما.

sa-yu-'addii 'ilaa 'alaaqat-in 'awthaq-a bayn-a-humaa.

It will lead to a firmer relationship between the two of them.

4.2.2.4 COMPARATIVE IN FORM ONLY: An adjective may occasionally have the comparative form, although its meaning is not comparative. In this case, it inflects for number, gender, and definiteness, as well as case:

	m. sg.	f. sg.	m. pl.
empty	أجوف 'ajwaf	جوفاء jawfaa'	جوف juuf
silly, stupid	أحمق 'aHmaq	حمقاء Hamqaa'	حماقى حمقى حمق Humuq~Hamqaa~Hamaaqaa

Examples:

تبدو فكرة حمقاء.

ta-bduu fikrat-an Hamqaa'-a.

It seems [like] a silly idea.

كيس أجوف

kiis-un 'ajwaf-u

an empty bag

(1) 'Other': 'aaxar آخر and 'uxraa أخرى

A special form of adjective is the word for 'other.' It has a unique inflectional paradigm that combines comparative and superlative patterns, but does not have comparative or superlative meaning. It inflects for number, gender, case, and definiteness.

	m. sg.	f. sg.	m. pl.	f. pl.
other; another	آخر 'aaxar	أخرى 'uxraa	آخرون 'aaxar-uuna	أخريات 'uxray-aat

Examples:

بشكل أو بآخر

bi-shakl-in 'aw bi-'aaxar-a

one way or another

مثل أي شعب آخر

mithl-a 'ayy-i sha'b-in 'aaxar-a

like any other people

من جهة أخرى <i>min jihat-in 'uxraa</i> from another perspective; on the other hand	يعتبره آخرون ضمانة. <i>ya-^ctabir-u-hu 'aaxar-uuna Damaanat-an.</i> Others consider it an assurance.
مرة أخرى <i>marrat-an 'uxraa</i> another time; one more time	أما المدينتان الأخريان <i>'ammaa l-madiinat-aani l-'uxray-aani</i> as for the other two cities

4.2.3 The periphrastic or phrasal comparative

Certain qualities, attributes, or descriptors do not fit into the pattern-change paradigm for comparative and superlative meanings. For example, *nisba* adjectives and the active and passive participles functioning as adjectives from the derived verb forms (II-X) have extra consonants or vowels as part of their essential word structure, so they cannot shift into the *'af'al* pattern without losing some of their identity and meaning. Moreover, certain colors are already of the *'af'al* pattern, so how does one express a quality such as “blacker,” or “whiter”?

Arabic handles this using a strategy similar to using “more” in English. Intensity words such as “more” plus the adjective are used, or words such as “stronger” plus a color word in order to form a descriptive comparative phrase.

The most common intensifying words used for forming the periphrastic comparative are:

أكثر	أشدّ	أقلّ
<i>'akthar</i>	<i>'ashadd</i>	<i>'aqall</i>
more	stronger	less

This intensifying word is then joined with a noun in the **indefinite accusative case**, a structure called *tamyiiz* or ‘accusative of specification.’⁸

كان أكثر تعاطفاً مع العرب.
kaan-a 'akthar-a ta^caaTuf-an ma^ca l-^carab-i.

He was **more favorably disposed** toward the Arabs.

يمكن أن يجعله أكثر تفاهماً للموقف.
yu-mkin-u -²an ya-j^cal-a-hu 'akthar-a tafaahum-an li-l-mawqifi.

It might make him **more understanding** of the situation.

أقل سهولة منه <i>'aqall-u suhuulat-an min-hu</i> less easy than it ('less in easiness')	هي أكثر مسؤولية منك. <i>hiya 'akthar-u mas²uuliyat-an min-ka.</i> She is more responsible than you.
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⁸ See Chapter 11, section 6 for more on the *tamyiiz* construction.

سلام أوسع وأكثر شمولية

salaam-un 'awsa^c-u wa-'akthar-u shumuuliyat-an

a wider and more inclusive peace

محرك أكثر كفاءة وأكثر اعتمادية

muHarrik-un 'akthar-u kaffaa^cat-an wa-'akthar-u 'timaadiyyat-an

a more capable and more dependable motor

هو أكثر دهاء من حسين.

huwa 'akthar-u dahaa^c-an min Husayn-in.

He is more shrewd than Hussein.

قد تكون أكثر أهمية.

qad ta-kuun-u 'akthar-a 'ahammiyyat-an.

They might be of more importance.

كان أكثر عدوانية وأقل سماحة.

kaan-a 'akthar-a 'udwaaniyyat-an wa-'aqall-a samaaHat-an.

It was more aggressive and less permissive.

4.2.4 The superlative

The form of the Arabic superlative adjective, which indicates the highest degree of comparison, resembles the comparative form *'af^cal* أَفْعَل. There are differences, however. The superlative form is always definite, defined by the definite article, a pronoun suffix, or by being the first term of an *'iDaafa*. Moreover, it has a feminine form as well: *fu^claa* فُعْلَى. Because the feminine form ends with *'alif* *maqSuura*, it does not inflect for case.

Examples:	Masculine	Feminine
biggest; oldest; greatest	الأَكْبَرُ <i>al-'akbar</i>	الْكُبْرَى <i>al-kubraa</i>
smallest	الأَصْغَرُ <i>al-'aSghar</i>	الصُّغْرَى <i>al-Sughraa</i>
greatest	الأَعْظَمُ <i>al-'a^cZam</i>	العُظْمَى <i>al-'uZmaa</i>
highest; supreme	الأَعْلَى <i>al-'a^claa</i>	الْعُلَى <i>al-'ulyaa</i>

In some instances a dual form or plural form of the superlative may be used. The plural form of the masculine superlative is either the sound masculine plural *'af^cal-uuna*, or *CaCaaCiC* (فَعَالِل *fa^caalil*), a diptote plural pattern. The plural of the feminine superlative is *CuCCayaat* (فُعْلَيَات *fu^clayaat*).

في الدولتين العظميين
fii l-dawlat-ayni l-ʿuZmay-ayni
 in the two super powers

في أية قائمة لأكابر علماء الدنيا
fii ʿayyat-i qaaʾimat-in li-ʾakaabir-i ʿulamaaʾ-i l-dunyaa
 on any list of the greatest scholars in the world

4.2.4.1 SUPERLATIVES IN CONTEXT: WORD ORDER: Superlative adjectives may follow a noun directly, may be used as the first term of an *ʾiDaafa* with a noun, or may have a pronoun suffix. In certain expressions, they occur alone, with the definite article.

- (1) **Following a definite noun:** The superlative adjective may, like the ordinary adjective, follow the noun. In that case, it agrees with the noun in gender, number, definiteness, and case:

القوة العظمى
al-quwwat-u l-ʿuZmaa
 the greatest power/ the super power

المجلس الأعلى
al-majlis-u l-ʾaʿlaa
 the supreme council

الدب الأكبر
al-dibb-u lʾakbar-u
 Ursa Major (constellation) 'the
 greatest bear'

الحدث الأبرز
al-Hadath-u l-ʾabraz-u
 the most prominent event

ذات الأهمية القصوى
dhaat-u l-ʾahammiyyat-i l-quSwaa
 of utmost importance

السؤال الأصعب
al-suʾaal-u l-ʾaSʿab-u
 the hardest question

بعد أزمة الثلاثينات الكبرى
baʿd-a ʾazmat-i l-thalaathiinaat-i l-kubraa
 after the major crisis of the thirties

- (1.1) **Fixed expressions with the superlative:** Sometimes, especially in set phrases, Arabic uses a superlative expression where English would use an ordinary adjective:

الشرق الأدنى
al-sharq-u l-ʾadnaa
 the Near ('nearest') East

الشرق الأوسط
al-sharq-u l-ʾawsaT-u
 the Middle ('middlest') East

القرون الوسطى
al-quruun-u l-wusTaa
 the Middle ('middlest') Ages

الحرب الكبرى
al-Harb-u l-kubraa
 the Great ('greatest') War (WWI)

أمريكا الوسطى والجنوبية
 'amriikaa l-wustTaa wa-l-januubiyyat-u
 Central ('most central') and South
 America

الدول الكبرى
 al-duwal-u l-kubraa
 the Great ('greatest') Powers

الإسكندر الأكبر
 al-iskandar al-'akbar-u
 Alexander the Great ('the greatest')

آسيا الصغرى
 'aasiyaa l-Sughraa
 Asia Minor ('the smallest')

- (2) As the first term of an *'iDaafa* with a singular, indefinite noun: The superlative adjective is often used as the first term of an *'iDaafa* with a singular, indefinite noun as the second term. In this structure, the adjective does not inflect for gender; it remains masculine singular no matter what the gender of the noun.

أصغر سمكة في العالم
 'aSghar-u samakat-in fii l-'aalam-i
 the smallest fish in the world

في أفضل شكل ممكن
 fii 'afDal-i shakl-in mumkin-in
 in the best way possible

هو أكبر مطار في كندا.
 huwa 'akbar-u maTaar-in fii kanadaa.
 It is the biggest airport in Canada.

لزيارة أقدم قصر
 li-ziyaarat-i 'aqdam-i qaSr-in
 to visit the oldest castle

على أبعد تقدير
 'alaa 'ab'ad-i taqdiir-in
 at the furthest estimate

في أقصى ساحل بحر الشمال
 fii 'aqSaa saaHil-i baHr-i l-shimaal-i
 on the farthest shore of the
 North Sea

حصل على لقب أفضل لاعب عربي.
 HaSal-a 'alaa laqab-i 'afDal-u
 laa'ib-in 'arabiyy-in.
 He obtained the title of 'best
 Arab player.'

أدنى مستوى
 'adnaa mustawan
 the lowest level

- (3) As first term of an *'iDaafa* with a plural noun: When a superlative adjective is used as the first term of an *'iDaafa* with a plural noun, the noun is normally definite, but may not always be. Normally the superlative adjective is in the masculine form, although the feminine may also occur.

أجمل سنوات صباي
 'ajmal-u sanawaat-i Sibaaya
 the most beautiful years of my
 childhood

أقوى لاعبين في العالم
 'aqwaa laa'ib-iina fii l-'aalam-i
 the strongest players in the
 world

بأحرّ التعازي القلبية المخلصة
bi-ʔaHarr-i l-taʕaazii l-qalbiyyat-i
l-muxliSat-i

with warmest, heartfelt,
 sincere condolences

باشتراك كبرى الشركات
bi-shtiraak-i kubraa l-sharikaat-i
 with the participation of the
 biggest companies

في أربع من أهمّ المدن
fii ʔarbaʕ-in min ʔahamm-i
l-mudun-i

in four of the most
 important cities

في أهمّ أربع مدن
fii ʔahamm-i ʔarbaʕ-i mudun-in
 in the four most important
 cities

- (4) With pronoun suffix: A superlative adjective may occur with a pronoun suffix.

فأغلبهم من المهاجرين المسلمين.
faʕaghlab-u-hum min-a l-muhaajir-iina l-muslim-iina.
 Most of them are Muslim emigrants.

أغلبهم ليس مؤرخاً.
ʕaghlab-u-hum lays-a muʕarrix-an.
 The majority of them are not historians.

- (5) With indefinite pronoun *maa* and following clause: The superlative adjective may be the first term of an *ʔiDaafa* whose second term is a phrase starting with an indefinite pronoun.

أخطر ما في الأمر
ʕaxTar-u maa fii l-ʕamr-i
 the most dangerous [thing] in the
 affair

أغرب ما في هذا الأمر
ʕaghrab-u maa fii haadhaa l-ʕamr-i
 the strangest [thing] in this affair

- (6) With definite article by itself: In certain expressions, the superlative adjective occurs alone, with the definite article.

خمسة أشخاص على الأقل
xamsat-u ʕashxaaS-in ʕalaa l-ʕaqall-i
 five people at least

لفترة وجيزة على الأقل
li-fatrat-in wajiizat-in ʕalaa l-ʕaqall-i
 for a brief period at least

5 The adjective *ʔiDaafa*, the “false” *ʔiDaafa*

(إضافة غير حقيقية *ʔiDaafa ghayr Haqiqiyya*)

The “adjective” *ʔiDaafa* is a particular use of the adjective as the first term of an *ʔiDaafa* or annexation structure. The adjective may take the definite article if it modifies a definite noun. Since this type of construct violates the general rules (by allowing the first term of the *ʔiDaafa* to take a definite article), it is called “unreal” or “false.”

This kind of phrase is used to describe a distinctive quality of an item, equivalent to hyphenated expressions in English such as fair-haired, long-legged, many-sided.

In this kind of *ʿiDaafa*, the adjective agrees with the noun it modifies in case, number, and gender. The second term of the adjective *ʿiDaafa* is a definite noun in the genitive case and refers to a particular property of the modified noun.⁹

5.1 Definite agreement

Here the adjective takes the definite article, agreeing with the noun it modifies.

اللجنة البرلمانية الواسعة النفوذ

al-lajnat-u l-barlamaaniyyat-u l-waasiʿat-u l-nafuudh-i

the widely influential parliamentary committee ('wide of influence')

هذا الفيلسوف العميق التفكير

haadha l-faylusuuḥ-u l-ʿamiiq-u l-tafkiir-i

this profound ('deep of thought') philosopher

5.2 Indefinite agreement

Here the adjective *ʿiDaafa* modifies an indefinite noun. The adjective does not therefore take a definite article but does not take nunation, either, because it is the first term of an *ʿiDaafa*.

في ظروف بالغة الأهمية

fii Zuruuf-in baalighat-i l-ʿahammiyyat-i

in circumstances of extreme
importance

إنكليزي بارد الأعصاب

ʿinkliiziyy-un baarid-u l-ʿaʿSaab-i

a cold-blooded ('cold-nerved')
Englishman

قدر متوسط الحجم

qid-r-un mutawassit-u l-Hajm-i

a medium-sized pot

على نار متوسطة الحرارة

ʿalaa naar-in mutawassit-i l-Haraarat-i

on a medium-hot fire

5.3 Adjective *ʿiDaafa* as predicate

When acting as a predicate adjective in an equational sentence, the adjective in the adjective *ʿiDaafa* lacks the definite article. For example:

هو هولندي الأصل.

huwa huulandiyy-u l-ʿaSl-i.

He is of Dutch origin.

Part two: Adjective derivation: the structure of Arabic adjectives

Arabic adjectives are structured in two ways: through derivation from a lexical root by means of the root-and-pattern system, or by means of attaching the *nisba*

⁹ For further discussion and examples of the adjective *ʿiDaafa*, see Chapter 8, section 1.9.2.

suffix *-iyy* (m.) or *-iyya* (f.) to create an adjective from another word (usually a noun). Very rarely, an adjective will exist on its own, without relation to a lexical root.

In traditional Arabic grammar, adjectives and nouns both fall under the syntactic category, *ism* ‘noun.’ The particular designations for the *nomen adjectivum* (Wright 1967, I:105) in Arabic include *al-waṣf*, الوصف, *al-sifa* الصفة, and *al-naʿt* النعت, referring to qualities, attributes, and epithets.¹⁰ These types of words function in ways that very closely parallel what would be termed “adjectives” in English, and many pedagogical texts refer to them simply as adjectives.

Active and passive participles may function either as adjectives or as nouns. When they function as adjectives, they follow the same inflectional and syntactic rules as adjectives, agreeing with the noun they modify in case, gender, number, and definiteness.

1 Derivation patterns from Form I trilateral roots

These adjective forms are based on particular morphological patterns derived from the base form of the verb, Form I. In some cases, an identical pattern may be used for nouns as well.¹¹ Some of the more commonly occurring adjectival patterns include the following.¹² Whereas the masculine plural patterns vary widely, the feminine plural, when used, is usually the sound feminine plural.

1.1 The CaCiiC or *faʿiil* فاعيل pattern

This is one of the most common adjective patterns. The plural forms, used only for human beings, may be several, including sometimes both sound plurals and broken plurals. The masculine plural applies to human males and to mixed groups of males and females. The much more predictable feminine plural forms (ending in */-aat/*) apply to groups of female human beings. Some of the more frequently occurring adjectives are as follows:

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
far, distant	بعيد <i>baʿiīd</i>	بعيدون بعداء بعاد <i>baʿiīd-uuna~ buʿadaaʿ~ biʿaad</i>
large, big	كبير <i>kabiir</i>	كبارون كبار <i>kabiir-uuna~ kibaar</i>

¹⁰ Beeston states: “One cannot establish for Arabic a word class of adjectives, syntactic considerations being the only identificatory criterion of an adjective” (1970, 44).

¹¹ For example, from the *faʿiil* pattern come nouns such as *wazīr* ‘minister,’ *jalīd* ‘ice,’ and *safiir* ‘ambassador.’

¹² Wright 1967, I:131–40 gives an extensive description of these adjective patterns and uses. He refers to them all as “verbal adjectives,” since he considers them derived from Form I verbs. However, I prefer to reserve the term “verbal adjectives” for active and passive particles, rather than adjectives in general.

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
small	صغير <i>Saghiir</i>	صغراء صغار <i>Sighaar~Sugharaa'</i>
nice; pleasant	لطيف <i>laTiif</i>	لطفاء لطاف <i>liTaaf~ luTafaa'</i>
great	عظيم <i>'aZiim</i>	عظائم عظماء عظام <i>'iZaam~ 'uZamaa'~ 'aZaa'im</i>
generous	كريم <i>kariim</i>	كرام <i>kiraam</i>
poor	فقير <i>faqiiir</i>	فقراء <i>fuqaraa'</i>
weak	ضعيف <i>Da'iiif</i>	ضعاف ضعفة ضعفاء <i>Du'afaa' ~ Da'afa ~ Di'aaf</i>
little; few	قليل <i>qaliil</i>	قلال أقلاء قلائل قليلون <i>qaliil-uuna ~ qalaa'il ~ 'aqillaa~ qilaal</i>
new	جديد <i>jadiid</i>	جدد <i>judud</i>

1.1.1 With passive meaning

When derived from a transitive verb root, the *fa'iil* pattern may carry the same meaning as a passive participle.

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
wounded	جريح <i>jariiH (PP: majruuH)</i>	جرحي <i>jarHaa</i>
killed	قتيل <i>qatiil (PP: maqtuul)</i>	قتلى <i>qatlaa</i>

1.2 The CaCCiC or *fa'ciil* فَعْل pattern

Adjectives of this pattern, if applied to human beings, usually use the sound plurals. This pattern appears frequently with hollow roots.

سَيِّئ	جَيِّد	قَيِّم	طَيِّب
<i>sayyi'</i>	<i>jayyid</i>	<i>qayyim</i>	<i>Tayyib</i>
bad	good	valuable	okay; fine

1.3 The CaCiC or *fa'īl* فَعَلَ pattern

Adjectives of this pattern also, if applied to human beings, usually use the sound plurals.

جشع	تعب	وسخ	خشن	عطر	مرن
<i>jashi^c</i>	<i>ta^cib</i>	<i>wasix</i>	<i>xashin</i>	<i>‘aTir</i>	<i>marin</i>
greedy	tired	dirty	coarse	fragrant	flexible

Examples:

سياسي جشع	سياسة مرنة
<i>siyaasiyy-un jashi^c-un</i>	<i>siyaasat-un marinat-un</i>
a greedy politician	a flexible policy

1.4 The CaCC / CuCC or *fa'īl* / *fu'īl* فَعَلَ / فُعِلَ pattern

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
hefty, huge	ضخم <i>Daxm</i>	ضخام <i>Dixaam</i>
free	حر <i>Hurr</i>	أحرار <i>Haraa'ir ~ 'aHraar</i>

Not usually used to refer to humans:

جم	سهل	صلب
<i>jamm</i>	<i>sahl</i>	<i>Sulb</i>
plentiful	easy	hard, firm

1.5 The CaCaC or *fa'āl* فَعَّلَ pattern

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
good	حسن <i>Hasan</i>	حسان <i>Hisaan</i>
middle, medial	وسط <i>wasat</i>	أوساط <i>'awsaaT</i>

1.6 The CaCCaan or *fa'laan* فَعَّلَان pattern

This pattern is for the most part, diptote in the masculine singular.¹³ It can have rather complex plural and feminine patterns, although none of these occurred in

¹³ The MECAS grammar (1965, 44) states for instance, that *kaslaan* is diptote, but it is not noted as such in Wehr (1979, 969), although Wehr notes *za'laan*, *ghaDbaan*, and *'aTshaan* as diptote. Wright (1967, I:133) gives both alternatives; Haywood and Nahmad (1962, 86) state that this pattern is “without nunation”; and Cowan (1964, 40) puts it in the diptote declension.

the data gathered for this book. Cowan states (1964, 40) “In Modern Arabic the pattern *fa‘laan-u* usually takes the sound endings in the feminine and the plural.”

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>f. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
sleepy	نعسان <i>na‘saan</i>	نعسانة <i>na‘saana</i>	نعسانون <i>na‘saan-uuna</i>
tired	تعبان <i>ta‘baan</i>	تعبانة <i>ta‘baana</i>	تعبانون <i>ta‘baan-uuna</i>
lazy	كسلان <i>kaslaan</i>	كسلانة <i>kaslaana</i>	كسالى كسلى <i>kasaalaa ~ kaslaa</i>
angry	زعلان <i>za‘laan</i>	زعلانة <i>za‘laana</i>	زعلانون <i>za‘laan-uuna</i>
angry	غضبان <i>ghaDbaan</i>	غضبى <i>ghaDbaa</i>	غضابى غضاب <i>ghiDaab ~ ghaDaabaa</i>
hungry	جوعان <i>jaw‘aan</i>	جوعى <i>jaw‘aa</i>	جياع <i>jiyaa‘</i>
thirsty	عطشان <i>‘aTshaan</i>	عطشى <i>‘aTshaa</i>	عطشى عطاش <i>‘iTaash ~ ‘aTshaa</i>

1.7 The CaCCaaC or *fa‘aal* فَعَال pattern

This pattern denotes intensity of a quality and takes sound plurals:

فَعَال	جَذَاب	مَجَان	رَحَال
<i>fa‘aal</i>	<i>jadhdhaab</i>	<i>majjaan</i>	<i>raHHaal</i>
effective	attractive	free of charge	roving, roaming

2 Quadriliteral root adjective patterns

The CaCCuuC or *fa‘luul* pattern from quadriliteral roots:

حَبُوح
baHbuuH
merry

3 Participles functioning as adjectives

Active and passive participles are verbal adjectives, that is, descriptive terms derived from a particular Form (I–X) of a verbal root. The active participle

describes the doer of an action and the passive participle describes the entity that receives the action, or has the action done to it. They therefore describe or refer to entities involved in an activity, either as noun modifiers (adjectives) or as substantives (nouns) themselves. Here we are dealing with them as adjectives.¹⁴

3.1 Active participles as adjectives

Active participles as adjectives describe the doer of an action. In context, they agree with the modified noun in gender, number, definiteness, and case. When used as adjectives modifying nouns referring to human beings in the plural, the sound feminine or the sound masculine plural is used.¹⁵

AP I: زائر <i>zaa'ir</i> visiting	AP I: هامّ <i>haamm</i> important	AP I: عالٍ <i>'aal-in</i> high
AP II: مبكّر <i>mukabbir</i> magnifying	AP III: مماثل <i>mumaathil</i> similar	AP III: مناوب <i>munaawib</i> on duty
AP IV: مشمس <i>mushmis</i> sunny	AP IV: ممطر <i>mumTir</i> rainy	AP IV: مملّ <i>mumill</i> boring
AP V: متوفرّ <i>mutawaffir</i> abundant	AP V: متأخّر <i>muta'axxir</i> late	AP VI: متزايد <i>mutazaayid</i> increasing
AP VI: متقاعد <i>mutaqaa'id</i> retired	AP VII: منعزل <i>mun'azil</i> isolated	AP VII: منكمش <i>munkamish</i> introverted; shrunk
AP VIII: مختلف <i>muxtalif</i> different	AP VIII: محترم <i>muHtarim</i> respectful	AP X: مستمرّ <i>mustamirr</i> continuous
AP X: مستحيل <i>mustaHiil</i> impossible	Quad. AP IV: مكفهرّ <i>mukfahirr</i> dusky, gloomy	Quad. AP IV: مطمئنّ <i>muTma'inn</i> calm, serene

¹⁴ See also Wright 1967, I:143–45.

¹⁵ Form I participles may take a broken or sound plural, but usually the sound plural is used when the participle functions as an adjective. Derived participles from the Forms II–X take sound plurals.

Examples:

Form I:

المرّة القادمة
al-marrat-a l-qaadimat-a
the next time

مهنة شاقّة
mihnat-un shaaqqat-un
a demanding profession

الوثب العالي
al-wathab-u l-^caalii
the high jump

وزير الاقتصاد السابق
waziir-u l-iqtiSaad-i l-saabiq-u
the former Minister of the Economy

Form IV:

النسائم المنعشة
al-nasaa' im-u l-mun^cishat-u
the refreshing breezes

اللجنة المشرفة
al-lajnat-u l-mushrifat-u
the supervisory committee

Form V:

دروس متقدّمة
duruus-un mutaqaaddimat-un
advanced lessons

Form X:

ساحة مستديرة
saaHat-un mustadiirat-un
a circular courtyard

3.2 Passive participles as adjectives

These participles usually take sound plurals when referring to human beings.

PP I:	معروف ma ^c ruuf known	PP I:	مبروك mabruuk blessed	PP II:	معقد mu ^c aqqaad complicated
PP II:	مصور muSawwar illustrated	PP II:	مفضل mufaDDal preferred; favorite	PP VI:	متداول mutadaawal prevailing
PP IV:	مدمج mudmaj compacted	PP IV:	مراد muraad desired	PP VIII:	منتخب muntaxab elected
PP VIII:	محتلّ muHtall occupied	PP X:	مستورد mustawrad imported	PP X:	مستعار musta ^c aar borrowed
Quad.		Quad.			
PP I:	مُفَرَّطَح mufarTaH flattened	PP I:	مُزَرَّكَش muzarkash embellished		

Examples:

Form II:

السلمون المدخن

al-salmuun-u l-mudaxxan-u

smoked salmon

بمواقعك المفضلة

bi-mawaaqi^c-i-ka l-mufaDDalat-i

in your favorite places

Form IV:

قرص مدمج

qurS-un mudmaj-un

compact disk

Form VIII:

الأراضي المحتلة

al-^oaraaDii l-muHtallat-u

the occupied lands

Form X:

أسماء مستعارة

^oasmaa^o-un musta^carat-un

pseudonyms ('borrowed names')

4 Derivation through suffixation: relative adjectives (*al-nisba* النسبة)

Converting a noun, participle, or even an adjective into a relative adjective through suffixation of the derivational morpheme *-iyy* (feminine *-iyya*) is an important derivational process in MSA and is actively used to coin new terms. The words used as stems for the *nisba* suffix can be Arabic or foreign, singular or plural. For the most part, their plurals are sound, except where noted.

4.1 *Nisba* from a singular noun

تاريخي	أسبوعي	إيجابي	حالي
<i>taariix-iyy</i>	<i>^ousbuu^c-iyy</i>	<i>^oiijaab-iyy</i>	<i>Haal-iyy</i>
historical	weekly	positive; affirmative	current
جزئي	إسلامي	شمسي	مركزي
<i>juz^o-iyy</i>	<i>^oislaam-iyy</i>	<i>shams-iyy</i>	<i>markaz-iyy</i>
partial	Islamic	solar	central
ذهبي	تأثري	جنوبي	
<i>dhahab-iyy</i>	<i>ta^oaththur-iyy</i>	<i>januub-iyy</i>	
golden	impressionist	southern	

Examples:

القطب الجنوبي

al-quTb-u l-januub-iyy-u

the south pole

حل جزئي

Hall-un juz^o-iyy-un

a partial solution

العالم الإسلامي

al-^ʿaalam-u l-^ʾislaam-iyy-u
the Islamic world

العلوم النظرية والتطبيقية

al-^ʿuluum-u l-naZariyyat-u wa-l-taTbiiyyat-u
theoretical and applied sciences

المكتب المركزي

al-maktab-u l-markaz-iyy-u
the central office

الفن الانطباعي

al-fann-u l-inTibaa^ʿ-iyy-u
impressionist art**4.1.1 *taa' marbuuTa* deletion**

If the base noun ends in *taa' marbuuTa*, the *taa' marbuuTa* is deleted before suffixing the *nisba* ending:

political سياسي

siyaas-iyy (from siyaasa, سياسة 'politics, policy')

artificial صناعي

Sinaa^ʿ-iyy (from Sinaa^ʿa صناعة 'craft; industry')

cultural ثقافي

thaqaaf-iyy (from thaqaafa ثقافة 'culture')

4.1.2 *waaw* insertion

If the noun ends in a suffix consisting of *'alif*, or *'alif-hamza*, the *hamza* may be deleted and a *waaw* may be inserted as a buffer:

desert; desert-like صحراوي

SaHraa-w-iyy (from SaHraa^ʾ صحراء 'desert' root: s-H-r)

مناخ صحراوي

munaax-un SaHraaw-iyy-un

a desert climate

semantic معنوي

ma^ʿna-w-iyy (from ma^ʿnan معنى 'meaning' root: ^ʿn-y)**4.1.3 Root *hamza* retention**

If the *hamza* is part of the lexical root, it cannot be deleted. Thus,

equatorial استوائي

istiwaa^ʾ-iyy (from istiwaa^ʾ استواء 'equator' root: s-w-^ʾ)

final نهائي

nihaa^ʾ-iyy (from nihaa^ʾ نهاية 'end' root: n-h-y)

4.1.4 Stem reduction

Sometimes the form of the base noun is reduced:

ecclesiastical, church-related كنسيّ
kanas-iyy (from *kaniisa* كنيسة 'church')

civic, civil مدنيّ
madan-iyy (from *madiina* مدينة 'city')

الطيران المدني
al-Tayaraan-u l-madan-iyy-u
 civil aviation

4.2 *Nisba* from a plural noun

A plural form of the noun may occasionally be used as the stem for the *nisba* suffix. This is especially true if the singular ends in *taa'* *marbuuTa*:

tax-related ضرائبيّ	international دوليّ
<i>Daraa'ib-iyy</i> (singular <i>Dariiba</i> ضريبة)	<i>duwal-iyy</i> (singular <i>dawla</i> دولة)
journalistic صحفيّ	women's نسائيّ، نسويّ
<i>SuHuf-iyy</i> (singular <i>SaHiifa</i> صحيفة)	<i>nisaa'-iyy/nisaw-iyy</i> (singular <i>'imra-a</i> امرأة)
documentary وثائقيّ	legal حقوقيّ
<i>wathaa' iq-iyy</i> (singular <i>wathiiqa</i> وثيقة)	<i>Huquuq-iyy</i> (singular <i>Haqq</i> حقّ)

Examples:

في فيلم وثائقيّ	في افتتاحيّة صحفية
<i>fii fiilm-in wathaa'iq-iyy-in</i>	<i>fii ftitaaHiyyat-in SuHufiyyat-in</i>
in a documentary film	in a newspaper editorial
الدراسات النسويّة	شبكة معلوماتيّة
<i>al-diraasaat-u l-nisawiyyat-u</i>	<i>shabkat-un ma'luumaatiyyat-un</i>
women's studies	information network

4.3 *Nisba* from a participle or adjective

موسوعيّ	أوليّ
<i>mawsuu'-iyy</i>	<i>'awwal-iyy</i> ¹⁶
comprehensive	preliminary

¹⁶ A variant on the *nisba* adjective based on the stem أولّ *'awwal* 'first' is the additional form *'awwalawiyya*, with an inserted /-aw/ between the stem and the *nisba* suffix, as in ضرورة أولويّة *Daruurat-un 'awwalawiyyat-un* 'a primary necessity.'

4.4 *Nisba* from place names

A place name is usually stripped down to its barest, simplest stem form before the *nisba* suffix is added. Definite articles, final long vowels, and final *taa'* *marbuu* are generally eliminated. It is here that one can see the origin of English adjectival terms ending in /-i/ such as 'Yemeni' and 'Iraqi,' which are modeled on the Arabic *nisba*.

4.4.1 Countries

الأردن	أردنيّ	السودان	سودانيّ
<i>al-'urdunn</i>	<i>'urdunn-iy</i>	<i>al-suudaan</i>	<i>suudaan-iy</i>
Jordan	Jordanian	Sudan	Sudanese
الكويت	كويتيّ	اليونان	يونانيّ
<i>al-kuwayt</i>	<i>kuwayt-iy</i>	<i>al-yuunaan</i>	<i>yuunaaan-iy</i>
Kuwait	Kuwaiti	Greece	Greek
الصين	صينيّ	تونس	تونسيّ
<i>al-Siin</i>	<i>Siin-iy</i>	<i>tunis</i>	<i>tunis-iy</i>
China	Chinese	Tunisia	Tunisian
فرنسا	فرنسيّ		
<i>faransaa</i>	<i>farans-iy</i>		
France	French		

4.4.2 Cities

القاهرة	قاهريّ	بغداد	بغداديّ
<i>al-qaahira</i>	<i>qaahir-iy</i>	<i>baghdaad</i>	<i>baghdaad-iy</i>
Cairo	Cairene	Baghdad	Baghdadi
بيروت	بيروتيّ		
<i>bayruut</i>	<i>bayruut-iy</i>		
Beirut	Beiruti		

4.4.3 Geographical areas

نجدّيّ	حجازيّ	خليجيّ
<i>najd-iy</i>	<i>Hijaz-iy</i>	<i>xaliij-iy</i>
from Nejd	from Hijaz	from the (Arabian) Gulf

4.4.4 Exceptions

With a few place names, a final *'alif* is retained in the *nisba*, in which case a *waaw* or *nuun* is inserted between the *'alif* and the *nisba* suffix:

نمساويّ	صنعانيّ
nimsaa-w-iyy	San ^ʿ aan-iyy
Austrian	from San ^ʿ aaʾ

4.5 Names of nationalities or ethnic groups

Certain terms, especially those referring to Middle Eastern groups, have non-*nisba* masculine plurals, but revert to the *nisba* form in the feminine plural. See also section 4.15.

	m. sg.	m. pl.	f. pl.
Arab	عربي ^ʿ arab-iyy	عرب ^ʿ arab	عربيات ^ʿ arabiyy-aat
Kurdish	كردي kurd-iyy	أكراد ^ʾ akraad	كرديات kurdiiyy-aat
Turkish	تركي turk-iyy	أتراك ترك turk ~ ^ʾ atraak	تركيات turkiyy-aat

4.6 *Nisba* from biliteral nouns

Nouns with only two root consonants usually insert a *waaw* before the affixation of the *nisba* suffix. The *waaw* is preceded by *fatHa*:

أخوي	أبوي	يدوي
^ʾ axa-w-iyy	^ʾ aba-w-iyy	yada-w-iyy
fraternal	paternal	manual

If the biliteral noun has a *taaʾ marbuu* suffix, that is deleted when the *waaw* is added:

سنوي	مئوي
sana-w-iyy	mi ^ʾ a-w-iyy
annual	centigrade; percentile

Examples:

شعور أبوي
shu^ʿuur-un ^ʾabawiyy-un
paternal feeling

مئة قنبلة يدوية
mi^ʾat-u qunbulat-in yadawiyyat-in
a hundred hand grenades

التشاور والحوار الأخوي
al-tashaawur-u wa-l-Hiwaar-u l-^ʾaxawiyy-u
consultation and fraternal conversation

النسبة المئوية للمسلمين
al-nisbat-u l-mi^ʾawiyyat-u li-l-muslimiina
the percentage of Muslims

4.7 *Nisbas* from quadriliteral nouns

عسكري	قرمزي	كهريائي	جمهوري
‘askar-iyy	qirmiz-iyy	kahrabaa’-iyy	jumhuur-iyy
military	crimson red	electrical	republican

4.8 *Nisbas* from quinquiliteral nouns

بنفسجي
banafsaj-iyy
 violet; purple

4.9 *Nisbas* from borrowed nouns

Derivation of an adjective from a borrowed noun is accomplished in several ways. For example, the English word “diplomatic” is rendered in Arabic as *diibu-umaasiyy*:

هو عميد السلك الدبلوماسي.
huwa ‘amiid-u l-silk-i l-diibluumaasiyy-i.
 He is the dean of the diplomatic corps.

4.9.1 Nouns ending in -aa or -aa’

If the borrowed noun ends in -aa or -aa’, the final vowel may be deleted, or the *hamza* deleted and the -aa buffered by a *waaw*:

chemical كيمياوي
kiimyaa-w-iyy (from *kiimyaa’* كيمياء ‘chemistry’)

musical موسيقي
muusiiq-iyy (from *muusiiqaa* موسيقى ‘music’)

4.9.2 *hamza* insertion

The foreign noun ending in -aa may get an additional *hamza* as a buffer between the stem and the suffix:

cinematic, film سينمائي
siinamaa’-iyy (from *siinamaa* سينما ‘movies, cinema’)

4.9.3 Intact stem

The foreign noun stem may be left intact and suffixed with -iyy:

أرشيفي	برميلي	كرنفالي
‘arshiif-iyy	barmil-iyy	karnifaal-iyy
archival	barrel-like	carnival-like

4.10 *Nisbas* from borrowed adjectives

In the following words, an English adjective ending in “-ic” or a French adjective ending in “-ique” has been borrowed and used as a stem. The *nisba* suffix is attached to it in order to convert it into an Arabic adjective:

ديناميكيّ	أوتوماتيكيّ	كلاسيكيّ
<i>diinaamiik-iy</i>	<i>ʔutuumaatiik-iy</i>	<i>kilaasiik-iy</i>
dynamic	automatic	classic

4.10.1 *Nisba* ending as replacive suffix

In the following instances, the adjective stem is borrowed but the “-ic” or “-ical” suffix is **replaced** by the Arabic *nisba* suffix:

استراتيجيّ	أكاديميّ	سيكولوجيّ
<i>istiraatii-iy</i>	<i>ʔakaadiim-iy</i>	<i>siikuuluuj-iy</i>
strategic	academic	psychological

4.11 *Nisbas* from particles and pronouns

Prepositions, adverbs and other particles may also have a *nisba* suffix:

بينيّ	كميّ	كفيّ
<i>bayn-iy</i>	<i>kamm-iy</i>	<i>kayf-iy</i>
inter- (in compounds)	quantitative	qualitative; discretionary
أماميّ	خلفيّ	ذاتيّ
<i>ʔamaam-iy</i>	<i>xalf-iy</i>	<i>dhaat-iy</i>
front; frontal	rear; hind	self- (in combinations)

Examples:

يجلسن في المقاعد الأماميّة.	قدمان خلفيّتان
<i>ya-jlis-na fii l-maqaaʔid-i l-ʔamaamiyyat-i.</i>	<i>qadam-aani xalf-iiyyat-aani</i>
They (f.) sit in the front seats.	two hind feet

تحقيق الاكتفاء الذاتيّ
taHqiq-u l-iktifaaʔ-i l-dhaatiyy-i
 achieving self-sufficiency

4.12 *Nisbas* from set phrases or fixed expressions

Technically, in traditional Arabic grammar, a *nisba* adjective cannot be formed from a phrase, only from a single word. Sometimes, however, a certain phrase is used so often that it becomes a fixed expression, behaving semantically and

syntactically as a morphological unit or compound noun. The following phrases and compound words with *nisba* suffixes occurred in data gathered for this study.

‘Middle Eastern’ شرق أوسطي

sharq ʿawsaT-iiy (from الشرق الأوسط *al-sharq-u l-ʿawsaT-u* ‘the Middle East’)

Examples:

النظام الشرق الأوسطي

al-niZaam-u l-sharq-u l-ʿawsaTiyy-u

the Middle Eastern system

إلى الأسواق الشرق الأوسطية

ʿilaa l-ʿaswaaq-i l-sharq-i l-ʿawsaTiyyat-i

to Middle Eastern markets

‘never-ending; everlasting’ لا نهائيّ

laa nihaaʿ-iiy (from لا نهاية *laa nihaaʿ-a* ‘there is no end’)

عبر تغيراته اللا نهائية

ʿabr-a taghayyuraat-i-hi l-laa nihaaʿiyyat-i

through its **never-ending** transformations

4.13 *Nisbas* from compound words

Compounding has traditionally been a very minor component of Arabic derivational morphology, but it is resorted to more often in MSA, especially when there is a requirement for coining technical terms. Relative adjectives are sometimes created from these compound stems.¹⁷

capitalistic رأسماليّ

raʿsmaal-iiy (from رأس مال *raʿs maal* ‘capital’)

amphibian برمائيّ

barmaaʿ-iiy (through compounding from the words *barr* ‘land’ and *maaʿ* ‘water’)

Recently coined technical terms sometimes make use of the shortened forms of *qabl-a* (*qab-*) ‘before’ and *fawq-a* (*faw-*) ‘above’ to express the concepts of “pre-” and “super-.” Sometimes these are combined with Arabic stems and sometimes with stems from other languages, suffixed with *-iiy*:

قبملاديّ

qab-miilaad-iiy

Before Christ (BC)

قبتاريخيّ

qab-taariix-iiy

prehistoric

قبكمبريّ

qab-kambr-iiy

Precambrian

فوصوتيّ

faw-Sawt-iiy

supersonic

¹⁷ For more in-depth discussion of compounding in Arabic, see Ali 1987, Emery 1988, and Shvitiel 1993.

4.14 Special use of *nisba*

Where in English one noun may be used to describe or modify another noun, in Arabic such a phrase often uses a *nisba* adjective:

طلاب جامعيون <i>Tullaab-un jaami'iy-y-uuna</i> university students	خبراء نفطيون <i>xubaraa'-u nifTiyy-uuna</i> oil experts
عظام حيوانية <i>'iZaam-un Hayawaaniyyat-un</i> animal bones	مناطق زمنية <i>manaaTi-q-u zamaniyyat-un</i> time zones

4.15 *Nisba* plurals

The preponderance of *nisba* plurals are sound, using the sound masculine or sound feminine plurals when referring to human beings. However, a few *nisbas* take broken or truncated plurals, especially when referring to ethnic or religious groups.

4.15.1 Truncated *nisba* plural

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
Arab	عربي <i>'arabiyy</i>	عرب <i>'arab</i>
bedouin	بدوي <i>badawiyy</i>	بدو <i>badw</i>
Jewish	يهودي <i>yahuudiyy</i>	يهود <i>yahuud</i>
Berber	بربري <i>barbariyy</i>	بربر <i>barbar</i>

4.15.2 Broken *nisba* plural

	<i>m. sg.</i>	<i>m. pl.</i>
foreign	أجنبي <i>'ajnabiyy</i>	أجانب <i>'ajaanib</i>
Christian	نصراني <i>naSraaniyy</i>	نصارى <i>naSaaraa</i>
Kurdish	كردي <i>kurdiyy</i>	أكراد <i>'akraad</i>
Turkish	تركي <i>turkiyy</i>	ترك ، أتراك <i>'atraak/turk</i>

5 Color adjectives

Color adjectives are of three types in Arabic: pattern-derived, *nisba*, and borrowed.

5.1 Pattern-derived color adjectives

The essential colors of the spectrum have a special pattern or form ^aCCaC or ^aaf^{al} **أفعل** in the masculine singular, CaCCaa' or fa^{alaa}'- فعلاء in the feminine singular, and CuCC or fu^l **فعل** in the plural. Here is a list of the most commonly occurring derived color adjectives. It includes black and white and brown as well as the primary colors: red, blue and yellow. It also includes green, but not orange or purple.

	m. sg.	f. sg.	m. pl.	f. pl.
black	أَسْوَد ^a aswad	سَوْدَاء sawdaa'	سُود suud	سَوْدَاوَات sawdaawaat
blue	أَزْرَق ^a azraq	زَرْقَاء zarqaa'	زُرْق zurq	زَرْقَاوَات zarqaawaat
brown	أَسْمَر ^a asmar	سَمْرَاء samraa'	سَمْر sumr	سَمْرَاوَات samraawaat
green	أَخْضَر ^a axDar	خَضْرَاء xaDraa'	خُضْر xuDr	خَضْرَاوَات xaDraawaat
red	أَحْمَر ^a aHmar	حَمْرَاء Hamraa'	حَمْر Humr	حَمْرَاوَات Hamraawaat
white	أَبْيَض ^a abyaD	بَيْضَاء bayDaa'	بَيْض biiD	بَيْضَاوَات bayDaawaat
yellow	أَصْفَر ^a aSfar	صَفْرَاء Safraa'	صَفْر Sufr	صَفْرَاوَات Safraawaat

There are three things to note and remember about these color adjectives. First, the masculine singular pattern ^aaf^{al} is diptote and is identical in form to the comparative adjective pattern (for example, ^aakbar 'bigger' or ^aatwal 'longer'), which is also diptote. Second, the feminine singular pattern fa^{alaa}' is also diptote. Third, the plural form is primarily used to refer to human beings, since the feminine singular would be used for modifying a nonhuman noun plural, in keeping with rules of gender and humanness agreement.¹⁸ Examples include:

¹⁸ One instance of the plural form of the adjective used with a nonhuman plural noun appeared in the corpus of data used for this text:

بطاقات «أميركان إكسپرس» الأخضر
biTaaqaat-u "amiirkaan ikisibris" l-xuDr-u
green American Express cards

5.1.1 Masculine phrases

الحوت الأزرق
al-Huut-u l-ʔazraq-u
the blue whale

البيت الأبيض
al-bayt-u l-ʔabyaD-u
the White House

البحر الأحمر
al-baHr-u l-ʔaHmar-u
the Red Sea

الصليب الأحمر
al-Saliib-u l-ʔaHmar-u
the Red Cross

5.1.2 Feminine phrases

جبنة بيضاء
jubnat-un bayDaaʔ-u
white cheese

روسيا البيضاء
ruusiyaa l-bayDaaʔ-u
White Russia

سلطة خضراء
salaTat-un xaDraaʔ-u
green salad

بدلة زرقاء
badalat-un zarqaaʔ-u
a blue suit

في القائمة السوداء
fii l-qaaʔimat-i l-sawdaaʔ-i
on the black list

في السوق السوداء
fii l-suuq-i l-sawdaaʔ-i
in the black market

5.1.3 Plural phrases

المسلمون السود
al-muslim-uuna l-suud-u
black Muslims

الخمير الأحمر
al-ximiir-u l-Humr-u
the Khmer Rouge

القبعات الزرق
al-qubbaʕaat-u l-zurq-u¹⁹
the blue berets (UN troops)

الهنود الأحمر
al-hunuud-u l-Humr-u
Red Indians

نساء سمراوات
nisaaʔ-un samraawaat-un
tawny-skinned women

5.2 Physical feature adjectives

The ʔafʕal pattern is used to denote not only color but also certain physical characteristics:

¹⁹ Although the word *qubbaʕaat* 'berets' is technically nonhuman, the reference is to human beings.

	m. sg.	f. sg.	m. pl.
blond	أشقر ’ashqar	شقراء shaqraa’	شقر shuqr
blind	أعمى ’a’maa	عمياء ’amyaa’	عميان عمي ’umy~’umyaan
deaf	أطرش ’aTrash	طرشاء Tarshaa’	طرش Tursh
lame	أعرج ’a’raj	عرجاء ’arjaa’	عرجان عرج ’urj~’urjaan
dumb, mute	أخرس ’axras	خرساء xarsaa’	خرسان خرس xurs~xursaan
stupid	أحمق ’aHmaq	حمقاء Hamqaa’	حمق Humq

مواطن سويدي أشقر
muwaaTin-un suwiidiyy-un ’ashqar-u
a blond Swedish citizen (m.)

الحسنة الشقراء
al-Hasnaa’-u l-shaqraa’-u
the blonde beauty (f.)

التعصب الأعمى
al-ta’aSSub-u l-’a’maa
blind fanaticism

5.3 Nisba color adjectives

Another process for deriving names of colors in Arabic is to identify the color of a naturally occurring substance, such as ashes, roses, oranges, or coffee beans, and then to affix the *nisba* ending *-iyy* onto that noun. Sometimes the base noun is of Arabic origin, and sometimes it is of foreign derivation.

Item name		Color
ashes	رماد ramaad	رماديّ ramaad-iyy gray
orange	برتقال burtuqaal	برتقاليّ burtuqaal-iyy orange

Item name		Color
rose	وردة warda	ورديّ ward-iiy pink
coffee beans	بنّ bunn	بنيّ bunn-iiy brown
violet	بنفسج banafsaj	بنفسجيّ banafsaj-iiy purple; violet
bronze	برونز buruunz	برونزيّ buruunz-iiy bronze

Inflection of these *nisba* adjectives follows the general rules for *nisbas*: adding a *taa' marbuuTa* for feminine agreement (including nonhuman plurals), and adding the sound masculine or sound feminine plural for plural (human) agreement.

الكتاب البرتقاليّ <i>al-kitaab-u l-burtuqaaliyy-u</i> the orange book	الذئاب الرمادية <i>al-dhi'aab-u l-ramaadiyyat-u</i> the gray wolves
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الرأس البرونزي
al-ra's-u l-buruunziyy-u
the bronze head

5.4 Borrowed color adjectives

In recent times, the practice has been to borrow directly names of certain colors or particular shades of colors that do not already exist in Arabic. These come mainly from European languages and do not inflect for number, gender, or case:

beige	بيج <i>bijj</i>	mauve	موف <i>muuf</i>	turquoise	تركواز <i>turkwaaz</i>
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6 Non-derived adjectives

Rarely, an Arabic adjective is non-derived and simply exists on its own, without relation to a productive lexical root:

عملاق / عمالقة <i>'amaaliqa/ 'imlaaq</i> gigantic; super	فَذَّ / فذوذ ~ أفذاذ <i>'afdhhaadh ~ fudhuudh / fadhhdh</i> unique, extraordinary
--	---

Examples:

الزواحف العملاقة	نموذج فذ
<i>al-zawaaHif-u l-ʿimlaaqat-u</i>	<i>namuudhaj-un fadhhdh-un</i>
the giant reptiles	a unique example

7 Compound adjectives

In order to express complex new concepts, compound (two-word) adjectival expressions are sometimes used in MSA. They occur primarily as adjective *ʾiDaafas*, or, for negative concepts, as adjectives in construct with the noun *ghayr*.

7.1 The active participle *mutaʿaddid* ‘numerous’

To express the concept of “multi-” as the first component of an Arabic compound, the AP *mutaʿaddid* is normally used.

متعدد الأطراف	متعدد الاستعمالات
<i>mutaʿaddid-u l-ʾaTraaf-i</i>	<i>mutaʿaddid-u l-istiʿmaalaat-i</i>
multilateral	multi-use
متعدد الأنظمة	متعدد الجنسيات
<i>mutaʿaddid-u l-ʾanZimat-i</i>	<i>mutaʿaddid-u l-jinsiyyaat-i</i>
multi-system	multinational

Examples:

لبرنامج المساعدات المتعددة الجنسيات
li-barnaamaj-i l-musaaʿadaat-i l-mutaʿaddidat-i l-jinsiyyaat-i
 for the program of multinational assistance

تتخذ الشركات المتعددة الجنسيات خطوات.
ta-ttaxidh-u l-sharikaat-u l-mutaʿaddidat-u l-jinsiyyaat-i xutuwaat-in.
 The multi-national companies are taking steps.

في هذه القضية المتعددة الجوانب
fii haadhihi l-qaDiyyat-i l-mutaʿaddid-i l-jawaanib-i
 in this multi-sided issue

7.2 The noun *ghayr* ‘non-; un-, in-, other than’

To express negative or privative concepts denoting absence of a quality or attribute, the noun *ghayr* is used.

The noun *ghayr* ‘other than’ becomes the first term of a construct phrase modifying the noun and carries the same case ending as the noun being modified. It does not, as the first term of the *ʾiDaafa*, ever have the definite article. The second

term of the construct is an adjective or participle in the genitive case which agrees with the noun being modified in gender, number, and definiteness. See also Chapter 8, section 1.9.3.

غير مناسب <i>ghayr-u munaasib-in</i> unsuitable	غير مباشر <i>ghayr-u mubaashir-in</i> indirect	غير إسلامي <i>ghayr-u -'islaamiyy-in</i> non-Islamic
غير لبق <i>ghayr-u labiq-in</i> tactless	غير عادي <i>ghayr-u 'aadiyy-in</i> unusual	غير مقدّس <i>ghayr-u muqaddas-in</i> unholy

Examples:

المواد الخام غير المتجدّدة
al-mawaadd-u l-xaam-u ghayr-u l-mutajaddidat-i
non-renewable raw materials

بطرق غير قانونيّة
bi-turuq-in ghayr-i qaanuuniyyat-in
by illegal means

الدفعات غير المشروعة كالرشاوي مثلاً
al-dafa'at-u ghayr-u l-mashruu'at-i ka-l-rashaawii mathal-an
illegal payments such as bribes, for example

اتفاقية غير مقدّسة
ittifaaqiyyat-un ghayr-u muqaddasat-in
an unholy agreement

غير قابلة للتزوير
ghayr-u qaabilat-in li-l-tazwiir-i
non-counterfeitable

Adverbs and adverbial expressions

A good general definition of adverbs is found in Hurford (1994, 10): “The most typical adverbs add specific information about time, manner, or place to the meanings of verbs or whole clauses.” Adverbs may also add information to adjectives (“very easy”) or even other adverbs (“late yesterday”). An essential characteristic of adverbs is that they are additive; that is, they are external to the core proposition in a clause or sentence. They are, as Stubbs has noted, “an optional element in clause structure” (1983, 70).

Arabic refers to this optional status as *faDla* فضلة ‘extra’ or ‘surplus’ parts of a sentence rather than part of the kernel or core predication. This optionality has meant that adverbs have traditionally received less attention from linguistic research than the major form classes (nouns and verbs), despite the fact that they are very common in both spoken and written discourse.¹

This class of words and phrases is also very heterogeneous in terms of its composition. Adverbial modification may be accomplished with single words (*daa'im-an* دائماً ‘always,’ *jidd-an* جداً ‘very’) or with phrases (*'ilaa Hadd-in maa* إلى حد ما ‘to a certain extent,’ *'aaжил-an 'aw 'aaжил-an* عاجلاً أو آجلاً ‘sooner or later’). Arabic adverbials also include grammatical structures such as the cognate accusative (*al-maf'uuл al-muTlaq* المفعول المطلق) and *Haal* حال (‘circumstantial’) phrases.

In Arabic, few words are adverbs in and of themselves; but there are some (such as *faqat* فقط ‘only’ or *huna* هنا ‘here’).² Most words that function as Arabic adverbs are adjectives or nouns in the accusative case (e.g., *'aHyaan-an* أحياناً ‘sometimes,’

¹ Stubbs notes that adverbs are one of three areas which have resisted traditional treatment in grammar (in addition to coordinating conjunctions and “particles”) and that none of these areas “fit neatly into the syntactic and semantic categories of contemporary linguistics” (1983, 70). Furthermore, he states (1983, 77): “Adverbs then, and certain items in particular, provide problems for sentence based grammars but are of great interest in a study of discourse sequences, since their functions are largely to do with the organization of connected discourse, and with the interpretation of functional categories of speech acts.”

² Cowan (1964, 63) starts his section on adverbs with the observation that “the Arabic language is exceedingly poor in adverbs,” referring to the fact that few Arabic words are inherently and solely adverbs. Haywood and Nahmad (1962, 426) open their chapter on “adverbial usage” with the statement: “Arabic has *no Adverbs*, properly speaking” (emphasis in original). They go on to explain that “this lack is hardly felt owing to the inherent flexibility and expressiveness of the language.”

ghad-an غدا ‘tomorrow,’ *al-yawm-a* ‘today’ (اليوم); some adverbials occur with a *Damma* ending (e.g., *ba^cd-u* بعد ‘yet’) and at least one ends consistently in *kasra* (*ʿams-i* أمس ‘yesterday’). Still other adverbial expressions are compound words consisting of a noun and a demonstrative suffix, e.g., *yawm-a-dhaak* يومَذاك ‘that day.’³

Placement of adverbs within an Arabic sentence is flexible to a certain extent, but sometimes particular adverbs have preferred positions. Several adverbs or adverbial expressions may occur in the same sentence. In the following one, for example, are four adverbs:

هناك اليوم مثلا خلافات حول الموضوع.

hunaaka l-yawm-a mathal-an xilaafaat-un Hawl-a l-mawDuu^c-i.

There [are] today, for example, disagreements about the subject.

The first adverb is the locative *hunaaka* هناك, ‘there is/are’; the second is the time adverbial *l-yawm-a* اليوم ‘today’; the third is *mathal-an* مثلا ‘for example’; and the fourth is the locative adverb *Hawl-a* حول ‘about.’

Most Arabic adverbials can be divided into **four major groups** according to their semantic function: **degree, manner, place, and time**. There are also some important categories that do not fall within these four groups, but which have key functions in Arabic, such as adverbial accusatives of cause or reason (*maf^cuul li-ʿajl-i-hi* لأجله or *maf^cuul la-hu* له مفعول) and the accusative of specification (*tamyiiz* تمييز). Within each of these categories there are several kinds of adverbial components. Given the heterogeneous and multifunctional nature of this class of expressions, the examples provided here are by no means exhaustive; but they represent a broad sample of occurrences in modern written Arabic.

1 Adverbs of degree

Adverbs of degree describe and quantify concepts such as intensity (“very,” “considerably,” “particularly”), measurement (“one by one”), or amount (“a little,” “a great deal,” “completely”). In some respects, they are a subcategory of manner adverbials, but they constitute a substantial group of their own.

1.1 Basic adverbs of degree

1.1.1 *faqat* فقط ‘only, solely’

This adverb of degree is a commonly used expression of limitation. It is invariable in form and ends with *sukuun*. In terms of its placement in a sentence, it

³ In discussing the Arabic morphological category of adverb, Wright (1967, I:282) notes that “there are three sorts of adverbs. The first class consists of *particles* of various origins, partly inseparable, partly separable; the second class of *indeclinable nouns* ending in *u*; the third class of *nouns* in the accusative” (emphasis in original). He includes an exhaustive list of particles, including interrogatives, negatives, and tense markers in his first category. In this book these particles are discussed according to their separate functions.

tends to occur at the end of the phrase or clause it modifies, but this is not absolute.

تعلم كلمات معدودة فقط.

ta'allam-a kalimaat-in ma'duudat-an faqaT.

He **only** learned a [limited] number of words.

لم تكن تسجيلًا فقط.

lam ta-kun tasjiil-an faqaT.

It was not **only** documentation.

الرحلة من جنيف إلى تونس تحتاج إلى ساعتين فقط.

al-riHlat-u min jiniif 'ilaa tuunis-a ta-Htaaj-u 'ilaa saa'at-ayni faqaT.

The trip from Geneva to Tunis takes **only** two hours.

استمر زواجهما سنتين فقط.

istamarr-a zawaaj-u-humaa sanat-ayni faqaT.

Their marriage lasted **only** two years.

كان الدور مكتوبًا في ثلاثة مشاهد فقط.

kaan-a l-dawr-u maktuub-an fii thalaathat-i mashaahid-a faqaT.

The role was written into three scenes **only**.

رغم حصولهم فقط على الميدالية الفضية

raghm-a HuSuul-i-him faqaT 'alaa l-miidaliyyat-i l-fiDDiyyat-i

despite their **only** winning the silver medal

1.2 Degree nouns and adjectives in the accusative

Adverbial modification is often managed in Arabic using nouns or adjectives in the **accusative case**. Certain accusative adverbials are used so frequently that they have become idiomatic. This is especially true of degree adverbials. Note that most of them occur in the indefinite accusative.

1.2.1 *jidd-an* جداً 'very'

This adverbial expression is of frequent occurrence in written Arabic. It follows the phrase that it modifies.

طبيعي جدًا أن نحبه.

Tabii'iy-un jidd-an 'an nu-Hibb-a-hu.

It is **very** natural that we love it.

شيء مؤسف جدًا

shay'-un mu'sif-un jidd-an

a **very** distressing thing

1.2.2 *kathiir-an* كثيرا 'much; a lot; greatly'

هذا أهم كثيرًا مما سبقه.

haadhaa 'ahamm-u kathiir-an mimmaa sabaq-a-hu.

This is **much** more important than what preceded it.

ابني مسافر وأنا أشتاق إليه كثيرا.

ibn-ii musaaḡir-un wa-ʿanaa ʿa-shtaaq-u ʿilay-hi kathiir-an.

My son is traveling and I miss him greatly.

1.2.3 *muTlaq-an* مطلقا 'absolutely'

لا أستطيع التكلم مطلقا.

laa ʿa-staTii-ʿu l-takallum-a muTlaq-an.

I absolutely cannot speak.

1.2.4 *qaliil-an* قليلا 'a little bit; a little'

أفهم قليلا.

ʿa-fham-u qaliil-an.

I understand a little.

1.2.5 *tamaam-an* تماما 'exactly; completely'

يجب عليها أن تدعم الاتفاق تماما.

ya-jib-u ʿalay-haa ʿan ta-dʿam-a l-tittifaaq-a tamaam-an.

It must support the agreement completely.

1.2.6 *xuSuuS-an* خصوصا 'especially'

خصوصا في ما يتعلق بالموز

xuSuuS-an fii maa ya-taʿallaaq-u bi-l-mawz-i

especially in what relates to bananas

1.2.7 *ʿajmaʿ-a* أجمع 'all; entirely; all together'

This adverbial accusative of degree is a comparative adjective. It is not nunated because the word *ʿajmaʿ* is diptote.

في أنحاء العالم أجمع

fii ʿanHaaʿ-i l-ʿaalam-i ʿajmaʿ-a

in all parts of the world

1.2.8 Repeated noun of measurement⁴

In these expressions, a noun in the accusative is repeated in order to indicate gradual sequencing.

⁴ 'Abd al-Latif et al. (1997, 340) refer to this structure as *al-Haal al-jaamida* 'solid Haal' or 'inflexible Haal.'

قام بتقبيلهم فردا فردا.

qaam-a bi-taqbiil-i-him fard-an fard-an.

He kissed ('undertook kissing') them **one by one** ('individual by individual').

أنه شيئا فشيئا يمكن أن يتدهرج

'anna-hu shay'-an fa-shay'-an yu-mkin-u 'an ya-tadaHraj-a

that it could **gradually** ('thing by thing') deteriorate

1.3 Adverbial phrases of degree

There are many of these types of phrases consisting of two or more words. These examples show some of the most frequently occurring ones.

1.3.1 *bi-l-DabT* بالضبط 'exactly, precisely'⁵

ما هو الهدف منها بالضبط؟

maa huwa l-hadaf-u min-haa bi-l-DabT-i?

What is the aim of it **precisely**?

هذا ما أقصده بالضبط.

haadhaa maa 'a-qsid-u-hu bi-l-DabT-i.

That is **exactly** what I mean.

1.3.2 *bi-kathiir-in* بكثير 'by a great amount; much'

This expression is usually used in the context of comparison or contrast.

تبدو أصغر بكثير من عمرها.

ta-bduu 'aSghar-a bi-kathiir-in min 'umr-i-haa.

She seems **much** ('by a great amount') younger than her age.

1.3.3 *laa siyyamaa* لا سيما 'especially; particularly'

This phrase literally means 'there is nothing similar.'⁶

لا سيما الأيام المشمسة

laa siyyamaa l-'ayyam-a l-mushmisat-a

especially on sunny days

لا سيما أنني لا أنتمي إلى أي جماعة

laa siyyamaa 'anna-nii laa 'a-ntamii 'ilaa 'ayy-i jamaa'at-in

especially since I do not belong to any [particular] group

1.3.4 *li-l-ghaayat-i* للغاية 'extremely; to the utmost'

كان الوضع سيئا للغاية.

kaan-a l-waD'u sayyi'-an li-l-ghaayat-i.

The situation was **extremely** bad.

⁵ This expression is often pronounced '*bi-l-ZabT*,' as though it were spelled with a *Zaa'* instead of a *Daad*.

⁶ See also Cantarino 1976, III:195-96.

1.3.5 *‘ilaa Hadd-in maa* إلى حدٍّ ما ‘to a certain extent; kind of; sort of’

‘ilaa Hadd-in kabiir-in إلى حدٍّ كبيرٍ ‘to a great extent’

سيساعد إلى حدٍّ كبيرٍ.

sa-yu-saa‘id-u ‘ilaa Hadd-in kabiir-in.

It will help to a great extent.

1.3.6 *ba‘D-a l-shay‘i* بعض الشيء ‘somewhat’

نجحوا بعض الشيء.

najaH-uu ba‘D-a l-shay‘i.

They succeeded somewhat.

1.3.7 *‘akthar-a min-a l-laazim* أكثر من اللازم; *‘akthar-a min-a l-luzuum-i* أكثر من اللزوم ‘too; over-; too much; more than necessary’

ربما كنت واثقا من نفسي أكثر من اللزوم.

rubba-maa kun-tu waathiq-an min nafs-ii ‘akthar-a min-a l-luzuum-i.

Perhaps I was overconfident.

1.3.8 *‘alaa l-‘aqall-i* على الأقل ‘at least’

لفترة وجيزة على الأقل

li-fatrat-in wajiizat-in ‘alaa l-‘aqall-i

for a brief time, at least

قتل خمسة أشخاص على الأقل

qutil-a xamsat-u ‘ashxaaS-in ‘alaa l-‘aqall-i

at least five persons were killed

في هذه المرحلة على الأقل

fii haadhihi l-marHalat-i ‘alaa l-‘aqall-i

at this stage, at least

1.3.9 *wa-Hasb-u* وحسب, *fa-Hasb-u* فحسب ‘only; that’s all’

لا تقتصر على حدود قطر وحسب.

laa ta-qtaSir-u ‘alaa Hudud-i qaTar-a wa-Hasb-u.

It is not limited to the borders of Qatar only.

2 Adverbs of manner

Manner adverbials provide a wide range of options for describing the state, condition, circumstances, manner, or way in which something is accomplished or happens.

2.1 Basic adverbs of manner

The members of this group are related to demonstrative pronouns.

2.1.1 *haakadhaa* هُكَذَا 'thus; and so; in such a way'

This adverb of manner indicates both comparison and consequence.

هُكَذَا كَانَتْ تَتَنَقَّلُ بَيْنَ مَرَاكِزِ الشَّامِ وَالْيَمَنِ.

haakadhaa kaan-at ta-tanaqqal-u bayn-a maraakiz-i l-shaam-i wa-l-yaman-i.

Thus it moved between the centers of Syria and Yemen.

هُكَذَا يَحْرِفُ الْأُورَبِيُّونَ لَفْظَ «الْجِهَادِ» وَيَتَرْجِمُونَهُ خَطَأً.

haakadhaa yu-Harrif-u l-ʔuurubbiyy-uuna lafZ-a 'l-jihaad-u'

wa-yu-tarjim-uuna-hu xaTT-an.

Thus do the Europeans distort the expression "jihad" and translate it literally.

2.1.2 *ka-dhaalika* كَذَلِكَ 'likewise; as well; also'

وَكَذَلِكَ الْمَقْشَاتُ الَّتِي مَا زَالَتْ مُسْتَعْمَلَةٌ

wa-ka-dhaalika l-miqashshaat-u llatii maa zaal-at mustaʿmalat-an

and likewise the brooms which are still used

يَسْتَعِدُّ كَذَلِكَ لِتَصْوِيرِ فِيلْمٍ.

ya-staʿidd-u ka-dhaalika li-taSwiiri-i fiilm-in.

He is also preparing to film a motion picture.

2.2 Nouns and adjectives in the accusative

Many nouns and adjectives are used in the accusative case to amplify a statement adverbially. Adverbs of manner are the most frequent, but many accusative adverbials do not fit that category precisely. In most cases, the indefinite accusative is used on the singular base form of the noun or adjective.

لَنْ نَنْسَى أَبَدًا.

lan na-nsaa ʔabad-an.

We will never forget.

وَهُنَاكَ أَيْضًا مَوْضُوعُ الْمَالِ.

wa-hunaaka ʔayD-an mawDuuʿ-u l-maal-i.

And there is also the subject of money.

أَذْكُرُهَا بَصْرِيًّا.

ʔa-dhkur-u-haa baSriyy-an.

I remember it visually.

سَأَسَافِرُ فَوْرًا.

sa-ʔu-saafir-u fawr-an.

I will depart at once.

عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَدْفَعَ مِئَةَ دِينَارٍ إِضَافَةً.

ʿalay-hi ʔan ya-dfaʿ-a miʔat-a diinaar-in ʔiDaafat-an.

He has to pay 100 dinars in addition/additionally.

إِنَّا جَمِيعًا نَعْمَلُ مِنْ أَجْلِ السَّلَامِ

ʔanna-naa jamiiʿ-an na-ʿmal-u min ʔajl-i l-salaam-i

that we are working together for peace

يعرفون هذا جيداً.

ya-^crif-uuna haadhaa jayyid-an.

They know that well.

فكرَ جدياً.

fakkar-a jiddiyy-an.

He thought seriously.

2.3 Manner adverbial phrases

There are four general ways to express manner adverbials in phrases: using the *Haal* structures, the cognate accusative, other accusative phrases, and prepositional phrases.

2.3.1 The circumstantial construction: *al-Haal* الحال

The *Haal* (literally ‘state’ or ‘condition’) or circumstantial accusative structure is a way of expressing the circumstances under which an action takes place. It is often structured using an active participle in the indefinite accusative to modify or describe the circumstances of the action. The participle agrees with the doer of the action in number and gender.⁷

سأله هامساً.

sa'al-a-hu haamis-an.

He asked him, whispering.

وترك المكتب مسرعاً.

wa-tarak-a l-maktab-a musri^c-an.

He left the office quickly/in a hurry.

قد ارتكب هذه الجريمة منفرداً.

qad-i rtakab-a haadhihi l-jariimat-a munfarid-an.

He committed this crime on his own/alone (‘individually’).

2.3.1.1 If the *Haal* active participle is from a transitive verb, it may take a noun object in the accusative case:

وافتح المؤتمر ممثلاً رئيس الجمهورية.

wa-ftataH-a l-mu'tamar-a mumaththil-an ra'iis-a l-jumhuuriyyat-i.

He opened the conference representing the president of the republic.

يكتب متهماً بعض المسؤولين.

ya-ktub-u muttahim-an ba'D-a l-mas'uul-iina.

He writes accusing some officials.

2.3.1.2 Occasionally, a passive participle is used in the *Haal* structure:

قفزت مذعورة.

qafaz-at madh'uurat-an.

She jumped, frightened.

⁷ For more examples and discussion of the *Haal* circumstantial structure in modern written Arabic, see Abboud and McCarus (1983) Part I:535–39, and Cantarino (1975) II:186–96 and III:242–54.

2.3.1.3 An adjective may also be used in the circumstantial accusative structure.

فقدت أمي صغيراً.

faqad-tu 'umm-i Saghir-an.

I lost my mother [when I was] **young**.

2.3.1.4 The circumstantial accusative is occasionally expressed with a **verbal noun** in the accusative:⁸

ألقى كلمة نيابة عن السفير.

'alqaa kalimat-an niyaabat-an 'an-i l-safiir-i.

He gave a speech in place of ('substituting for') the ambassador.

وقال رداً على سؤال ...

wa-qaal-a radd-an 'alaa su'aal-in ...

he said, **responding** to a question ...

وتعليقاً على الحادث ...

wa-ta'liiq-an 'alaa l-Haadith-i ...

commenting on the incident ...

وكان قد أغتيل ... سيراً على القدمين ...

wa-kaan-a qad ughtiil-a ... sayr-an 'alaa l-qadam-ayni ...

He had been assassinated [while] **walking** ('on two feet') ...

2.3.1.5 *Haal* EXPRESSING CAPACITY OR FUNCTION: A noun or participle may be used in the accusative to express the idea of "in the capacity of" or "as":

يعمل محرراً أدبياً.

ya-'mal-u muHarrir-an 'adabiyy-an.

He works as a literary editor.

2.3.1.6 *Haal* CLAUSE WITH *waaw* واو (*waaw al-Haal* واو الحال): Another way of expressing the circumstances under which an action takes place is to use the connecting particle *wa-* followed by a pronoun and a clause describing the circumstances.

وفوجئ وهو يقطع الحطب.

wa-fuuj-i? -a wa-huwa ya-qTa' -u l-HaTab-a.

He was surprised while he was cutting wood.

دخلا وهما يرتديان زيّاً إسلامياً.

daxal-aa wa-humaa ya-rtadiy-aani ziyy-an 'islaamiyy-an.

The two of them entered wearing Islamic garb.

⁸ Cantarino (1975, II:193-96) lists five form classes that may be used with the circumstantial accusative: adjectives, active participles, passive participles, substantives, or "infinitives" (i.e., *maSdars*; verbal nouns).

سقطت شجرة عليه وهو يحاول فتح طريق.

saqaT-at shajarat-un °alay-hi wa-huwa yu-Haawil-u fatH-a Tariiq-in.

A tree fell on him while he was trying to open a road.

2.3.1.7 Haal WITH PAST TENSE: If the circumstances referred to by the *Haal* structure precede the action noted by the main verb, and especially if they form a background for the main verb, the *waaw al-Haal* is used with *qad* and a past tense verb. Abboud and McCarus state that “this construction indicates a completed action whose results are still in effect” (1985, Part I:537).

انتهى أمس المؤتمر الثاني . . . وقد نظّمه النادي العربي.

intahaa °ams-i l-mu°tamar-u l-thaanii . . . wa-qad naZZam-a-hu l-naadii l-°arabiyy-u.

Yesterday the second conference ended . . . **having been organized** by the Arabic club (‘the Arabic club having organized it’).

2.3.1.8 Haal CLAUSES WITHOUT *waaw*: In yet another form of *Haal*, a main verb may be followed directly by another verb that gives a further description of either the agent or the object of the main verb. Most often, the main verb is past tense and the following verb in the present tense, but not always.

. . . ومضى يقول . . .

wa-maDaa ya-quul-u

He went on, saying . . .

شاهدته يرش طلاء.

shaahad-at-hu ya-rushsh-u Talaa°-an.

She saw him spattering paint.

لا تتركك تنتظر.

laa ta-truk-u-ka ta-ntaZir-u.

It does not leave you waiting.

2.3.2 The cognate accusative: *al-maf°uul al-muTlaq* المفعول المطلق

The cognate accusative is an elegant way of emphasizing or enhancing a previous statement by deriving a verbal noun from the main verb or predicate (which may also be in the form of a participle or verbal noun) and modifying the derived verbal noun with an adjective that intensifies the effect of the statement. The verbal noun and its modifying adjective are usually in the indefinite accusative.

2.3.2.1 VERBAL NOUN + ADJECTIVE:

تدرك ذلك إدراكاً كلياً.

tu-drik-u dhaalika °idraak-an kulliyy-an.

It realizes that fully.

يشارك فيها مشاركة فعالة.

yu-shaarik-u fii-haa mushaarakt-an fa^caalat-an.

He is participating effectively in it.

لحل الموضوع حلاً جذرياً.

li-Hall-i l-mawDuu^c-i Hall-an jidhriyy-an

to solve the problem fundamentally

ففرح لذلك فرحاً شديداً.

fa-fariH-a li-dhaalika faraH-an shadiid-an.

He was extremely happy at that.

وعلى المواطنين أن يعرفوا بعضهم بعضاً معرفة جيدة.

wa-^calaa l-muwaaTin-iina ^aan ya-^crif-uu ba^cD-u-hum ba^cD-an ma^crifat-an jayyidat-an.

It is necessary for citizens to know each other well.

2.3.3.2 VERBAL NOUN IN ^aiDaafa: The cognate accusative structure may also have the verbal noun as the second term of an ^aiDaafa construction whose first term is a qualifier or quantifier in the accusative case:

يختلف كل الاختلاف.

ya-xtalif-u kull-a l-ixtilaaf-i.

It differs completely.

أشكرك عميقاً الشكر على ما قدمت.

^aa-shkur-u-ka ^camiiq-a l-shukr-i ^calaa maa qaddam-ta.

I thank you deeply for what you have offered.

2.3.4 Other phrasal manner adverbials

Phrases that function adverbially are of two sorts: accusative adverbials or prepositional phrases.

2.3.4.1 waHd-a وَحْدَ + PRONOUN SUFFIX 'ALONE, BY ONE'S SELF': The adverbial expression *waHd-a* plus pronoun suffix is used in apposition with a noun to indicate or specify the meaning of 'alone,' 'on one's own,' or 'by one's self.' It is invariably in the accusative case, no matter what case its head noun is in, and is suffixed with a personal pronoun that refers back to the head noun.

للأمير العباسي وحده

li-l-^aamiir-i l-^cabbaasiyy-i waHd-a-hu

for the Abbasid amir alone

هو وحده المرجع الصالح.

huwa waHd-a-hu l-marji^c-u l-SaaliH-u.

He alone is the competent authority.

النيات الحسنة وحدها لا تكفي.	ذهب وحده إلى الدكان.
<i>al-niyaat-u l-Hasanat-u waHd-a-haa laa ta-kfii.</i>	<i>dhahab-a waHd-a-hu 'ilaa l-dukkaan-i</i>
Good intentions alone are not enough.	He went to the shop by himself.

2.3.4.2 PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES: A prepositional phrase may function as manner adverbial.

- (1) *bi-* بِ or *fii* فِي: The preposition *bi-* is often used with a noun to modify a verb phrase by describing the manner in which an action takes place.

أحبها بجنون.	ينظر إليها بصمت.
<i>'aHabb-a-haa bi-junuun-in.</i>	<i>ya-nZur-u 'ilay-haa bi-Samt-in.</i>
He loved her madly.	He looks at her in silence/silently.
رفضت المشروع بشدة.	تعال بسرعة.
<i>rafaD-at-i l-mashruu'a bi-shiddat-in.</i>	<i>ta'aal-a bi-sur'at-in!</i>
It refused the plan forcefully.	Come quickly!

When indicating manner, *bi-* or *fii* are sometimes prefixed to a noun such as *Suura* 'manner,' *Tariiqaa* 'way,' or *shakl* 'form' followed by a modifier that provides the exact description of the manner:

بهذا الشكل الواسع	في شكل أساسي
<i>bi-haadhaa l-shakl-i l-waasi'i</i>	<i>fii shakl-in 'asaasiyy-in</i>
in this extensive way	in a fundamental way
في شكل جذري	بصورة عامة
<i>fii shakl-in jidhriyy-in</i>	<i>bi-Suurat-in 'aammat-in</i>
in a radical way	generally
بصورة حماسية	بصورة فورية
<i>bi-Suurat-in Hamaasiyyat-in</i>	<i>bi-Suurat-in fawriyyat-in</i>
enthusiastically	immediately
بطريقة غير مباشرة	بطرق غير قانونية
<i>bi-Tariiqat-in ghayr-i mubaashirat-in</i>	<i>bi-Turuq-in ghayr-i qaanuuniyyat-in</i>
indirectly	in illegal ways

- (2) Other prepositions may also occur in manner adverbial phrases:

القرار سيتخذ في كل قضية على انفراد.
<i>al-qaraar-u sa-yu-ttaxadh-u fii kull-i qaDiyyat-in 'alaa nfiraad-in.</i>
Decision will be made on each issue individually.
تدرس في المكتبة كالعادة.
<i>ta-drus-u fii l-maktabat-i ka-l-'aadat-i.</i>
She is studying in the library, as usual.

3 Place adverbials

3.1 One-word adverbs of place

3.1.1 *hunaa* هُنَا and *hunaaka* هُنَاكَ ‘here’ and ‘there’

These two adverbs are deictic locatives, that is, they indicate proximity or remoteness from the speaker. They are also considered locative pronouns. In addition to indicating relative distance, the adverb *hunaaka* هُنَاكَ ‘there’ is used figuratively for existential predications to indicate the concept “there is” or “there are.” These adverbs are invariable; they always end with *fatHa*. A variant of *hunaaka* هُنَاكَ indicating slightly greater distance is *hunaalika* هُنَاكَ (over) there.’

3.1.1.1 *hunaa* هُنَا ‘HERE’

هنا يبدأ الحلم.

hunaa ya-bda²-u l-Hulm-u.

Here begins the dream.

أعيش هنا مع أسرتي.

‘a-‘iish-u hunaa ma-‘a ‘usrat-ii.

I live here with my family.

عندما جئنا إلى هنا

‘ind-a-maa ji²-naa ‘ilaa hunaa

when we came here

فابتعد عن هنا!

fa-bta‘id ‘an hunaa!

So you get away from here!

3.1.1.2 *hunaaka* هُنَاكَ ‘THERE’ (SPATIAL LOCATIVE)

يريد أن يصعد إلى هناك.

yu-riid-u ‘an ya-S‘ad-a ‘ilaa hunaaka.

He wants to go up there.

لن تظل هناك إلى الأبد.

lan ta-Zall-a hunaaka ‘ilaa l-‘abad-i.

It won’t stay there forever.

3.1.1.3 *hunaaka* هُنَاكَ ‘THERE IS; THERE ARE’ (EXISTENTIAL LOCATIVE)

هناك أربعة مكاتب سياحية.

hunaaka ‘arba‘at-u makaatib-a siyaaHiyyat-in.

There are four tourist offices.

هناك من يقول . . .

hunaaka man ya-quul-u . . .

There are [those] who say . . .

فهناك اتفاق فلسطيني إسرائيلي.

fa-hunaaka ttifaaq-un filisTiiniyy-un-israa‘iiliyy-un.

There is a Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

ينبغي أن تكون هناك علاقة حسن جوار.

ya-nbaghii ‘an ta-kuun-a hunaaka ‘alaaqat-u Husn-i jiwaar-in.

There ought to be a good neighbor relationship.

3.1.1.4 *hunaalika* هُنَاكَ: This variant of *hunaaka* is very similar in meaning although sometimes it indicates a more remote distance (actual or figurative).

كانت هناك فكرة لدخول مجلس الشعب.

kaan-at hunaalika fikrat-un li-duxuul-i majlis-i l-sha‘b-i.

There was (remotely) an idea of entering the house of representatives.

3.1.2 *thammat-a* ثَمَّة 'there is; there are'

The word *thammat-a* ثَمَّة has *fatHa* as an invariable ending and predicates existence in much the same way as *hunaaka* هناك.

فثَمَّة قِيم مَخْتَلِفَة	و ثَمَّة عِلْمَاء يَعْتَقِدُونَ أَنَّ ...
<i>fa-thammat-a qiyam-un muxtalifat-un</i>	<i>wa-thammat-a ʿulamaaʿ-u yaʿ-taqid-uuna ʿanna ...</i>
for there are different values	and there are scholars who believe that ...

ليس في الأمر ثَمَّة صُقُورٍ أَوْ حَمَائِمٍ.
lays-a fii l-ʿamr-i thammat-a Suquur-un ʿaw Hamaaʿim -u.
 There are neither hawks nor doves in the matter.

هل ثَمَّة إِضَافَاتٍ إِلَى ذَلِكَ؟
hal thammat-a ʿiDaafaat-un ʿilaa dhaalika?
 Are there additions to that?

3.1.3 *Hayth-u* حَيْث 'where'

The connective adverb *Hayth-u* denotes the concept of 'where' or 'in which' and connects one clause with another. It has an invariable *Damma* suffix.⁹

فِي كَلِيَّةٍ حَيْثُ تَدْرُسُ	حَيْثُ الْقَدِيمُ يَخْتَلِطُ مَعَ الْحَدِيثِ
<i>fii kulliyyat-in Hayth-u tu-darris-u</i>	<i>Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u maʿ-a l-Hadiith-i</i>
in a college where she teaches	where the old mixes with the new

حَيْثُ تَشْرِبُ الطَّرِيقَ
Hayth-u ta-shraʿibb-u l-Tariiq-u
 where the road stretches

3.2 Accusative adverbial of place

A noun may be marked with the indefinite accusative in order to indicate direction or location.

هَلْ سَرْتِ يَمِينًا أَوْ شِمَالًا؟
hal sir-ta yamiin-an ʿaw shimaal-an?
 Did you go right or left?

3.3 Locative adverbs or semi-prepositions (*Zuruuf makaan*

wa-Zuruuf zamaan ظروف مكان وظروف زمان)

These adverbs are actually nouns of location marked with the accusative case, functioning as the first term of an *ʿiDaafa*, with a following noun in the genitive, or with a pronoun suffix. The location may be spatial or temporal. Although close

⁹ Note that the question word "where?" is different: *ʿayna* أين (see Chapter 17, section 1); see also Chapter 18, section 6.1.

to prepositions in both meaning and function, these words are of substantive (usually trilateral root) origin and may inflect for genitive case if they are preceded by a true preposition.¹⁰

بعد أربعة أشهر
ba^ʿd-a ʿarba^ʿat-i ʿashhur-in
after four months

تعيش تحت الماء.
ta-^ʿiish-u taHt-a l-maa^ʿ-i.
They live **under** water.

قبل سنتين
qabl-a sanat-ayni
two years **ago**

من تحت منضدة خشبية
min taHt-i minDadat-in
xashabiyyat-in
from under a wooden table

3.4 Phrasal adverbs of place

Adverbial expressions of place often occur in the form of prepositional phrases.

بدأ اجتماعاته في القدس المحتلة.
bada^ʿ-a jtimaa^ʿaat-i-hi fii l-quds-i l-muHtallat-i.
He began his meetings **in** occupied Jerusalem.

في مقهى على الرصيف
fii maqhan ʿalaa l-raSiif-i
at a café on the sidewalk

في مستشفى الملك خالد
fii mustashfaa l-malik-i xaalid-in
at King Khalid Hospital

على الصعيد الدولي
ʿalaa l-Saʿiid-i l-duwaliyy -i
on the international level

4 Time adverbials

Adverbial expressions of time fall into four categories: basic adverbs, single nouns and adjectives in the accusative, compound time demonstratives, and phrases.

4.1 Basic adverbs of time

These words denote particular points in time and tend to remain in one form without inflecting for case or definiteness.

4.1.1 *ʿams-i* أمس 'yesterday'

The invariable adverb *ʿams-i* is unusual in that it ends in *kasra*. It does not take nunation even when it lacks the definite article. According to Wright, the *kasra* is not a case ending, but an anaptyctic vowel, added to ease pronunciation.¹¹ In terms of placement within a sentence, it is flexible because it is a short word and it is often inserted prior to a longer phrase; the only place it does not occur is in initial position.

¹⁰ See also Chapter 16 on prepositions and semi-prepositions, section 3.

¹¹ "The *kesra* is not the mark of the genitive but merely a light vowel, added to render the pronunciation easy" Wright 1967, I:290. Note that if the definite article is attached to *ʿams*, it becomes fully inflectable.

عاد إلى القاهرة أمس. وصل الرئيسان إلى مسقط أمس.
 ‘aad-a ‘ilaa l-qaahirat-i ‘ams-i. waSal-a l-ra‘iis-aani ‘ilaa masqaT-a ‘ams-i.
 He returned to Cairo yesterday. The two presidents arrived in Muscat yesterday.

ذكر راديو صوت لبنان صباح أمس...
 dhakara raadyuu Sawt-u lubnaan-a SabaaH-a ‘ams-i...
 the radio [station] “The Voice of Lebanon” mentioned yesterday morning...

4.1.1.1 OCCASIONALLY, ‘ams IS USED WITH THE DEFINITE ARTICLE.

كان ذاك بالأمس.
 kaana dhaaka bi-l-‘ams-i.
 That was yesterday.

4.1.1.2 Because it is used adverbially, ‘ams-i is considered to be a “virtual” accusative (despite the presence of *kasra*), so that when it has a modifier, or noun in apposition, that modifier or noun is in the accusative case:

في غارة نفذها أمس الأول
 fii ghaarat-in naffadh-a-haa ‘ams-i l-‘awwal-a
 in a raid it carried out the day before yesterday

4.1.2 al-‘aan-a ‘now’

The expression *al-‘aan-a* is invariable as an adverb, remaining in the accusative even after a preposition:

افتح الآن!
 iftaH-i l-‘aan-a!
 Open now!

يريدان الآن جدول أعمال مشترك.
 yu-riid-aani l-‘aan-a jadwal-a ‘a‘maal-in
 mushtarik-an.
 They (two) now want a shared agenda.

وظهر حتى الآن خمسة وخمسون عددا من المجلة.
 wa-Zahar-a Hattaa l-‘aan-a xamsat-un wa-xamsuuna ‘adad-an min-a l-majallat-i.
 Up to now 55 issues of the magazine have appeared.

4.1.3 ba‘d-u ‘yet; still’

The word *ba‘d-u*, with the *Damma* inflection and no nunation, acts as an adverb in negative clauses to mean ‘not... yet,’ ‘still... not.’ When inflected with the *Damma*, it cannot be the first term of a genitive construct.¹²

¹² The *Damma* is not thought to represent the nominative case here but is rather an archaic form of Semitic locative “un ancien cas adverbial en -u qui n’est pas le nominatif” (Lecomte 1968, 90). Similar forms such as *qabl-u* ‘before,’ *fawq-u* ‘above,’ and *taHt-u* ‘beneath’ also exist, with the restriction that they may not occur as the first term of an *‘iDaafa*. On this topic see also Fleisch 1961, I:280, and Chapter 16, section 3.4.3.

لم تكشف هوياتهم بعد.

lam tu-kshaf huwiyyaat-u-hum **ba°d-u**.

Their identities have not yet been revealed.

ترك جروحا لم تلتئم بعد.

tarak-a juruuH-an lam ta-lta°im **ba°d-u**.

It left wounds that still have not healed.

لم يحدد مواعده بعد.

lam yu-Haddad maw°id-u-hu **ba°d-u**.

Its date has not yet been set.

لم يصل بعد سوى إلى قلة من بيوت المصريين.

lam ya-Sil **ba°d-u** siwaa °ilaa qillat-in min buyuut-i l-miSriyy-iina.

It has still reached very few Egyptian households. (It still hasn't reached but a few Egyptian households.)

4.1.3.1 fii-maa ba°d-u فيما بعد 'LATER': The idiomatic expression **fii-maa ba°d-u** means 'later; later on.'

ثم ضعها فيما بعد في كتابك.

thumm-a Da°-haa **fii-maa ba°d-u**

fii kitaab-i-ka.

Then put it later in your book.

سأتلفن لك فيما بعد.

sa-°u-talfin-u la-ka **fii-maa ba°d-u**.

I will telephone ('to') you later.

4.1.4 thumm-a ثم; min thumm-a من 'then; after that; subsequently'

Both of these expressions denote sequential action. Note that *thumm-a* invariably ends with *fatHa*.

انتقل من ثم إلى العمل في الجامعة.

intaqal-a min **thumm-a**

°ilaa l-°amal-i fii l-jaami°at-i.

After that he transferred to work in the university.

ثم صعد إلى المنبر.

thumm-a Sa°ad-a °ilaa l-minbar-i.

Then he went up onto the dais.

4.2 Time nouns and adjectives in the accusative

Specific times or time nouns are marked for the accusative. They may be definite or indefinite.

4.2.1 Indefinite accusative time nouns

هل سنتدخل أو لا نتدخل أبداً؟

hal sa-na-tadaxxal-u °aw laa na-tadaxxal-u °abad-an?

Shall we interfere or never interfere?

وأخيراً جاءت إلى القاهرة.

wa-°axiir-an jaa°at °ilaa l-qaahirat-i.

And finally she came to Cairo.

كانوا دائماً على علاقة معها.

kaan-u daa°im-an °alaa °alaaqat-in ma°-a-haa.

They were always in touch with her.

الرئيس يتفقد غداً مواقع العمل.

al-raʔ iis-u ya-tafaqqad-u ghad-an mawaaqiʿ-a l-ʿamal-i.

The President inspects work sites **tomorrow**.

حصلت حديثاً على الجنسية.

HaSal-tu Hadiith-an ʿalaa l-jinsiyyat-i.

I **recently** obtained citizenship.

اللجنة ستعقد اجتماعين سنوياً.

al-lajnat-u sa-ta-ʿqud-u jtimaaʿ-ayni sanawiyy-an.

The committee will hold two meetings **yearly**.

في زيارة لإندونيسيا تستغرق أسبوعاً

fii ziyaaarat-in li-ʔinduuniisiyaa ta-staghriq-u ʔusbuuʿ-an

on a visit to Indonesia that lasts **a week**

الندوة تستمر يوماً واحداً.

al-nadwat-u ta-stamirr-u yawm-an waaHid-an.

The seminar lasts **one day**.

4.2.2 Definite accusative time nouns

اليوم الخميس

al-yawm-a l-xamiis-a

today, Thursday

الليلة قبل الماضية

al-laylat-a qabl-a l-maaDiyat-i

the night before last

تغير استخدامها مطلع القرن الماضي.

taghayyar-a stixdaam-u-haa maTlaʿ-a l-qarn-i l-maaDii

Its use changed **at the onset/beginning** of the last century.

4.3 Compound time adverbials

4.3.1 -dhaaka ذاك – expressions

Time nouns in the accusative suffixed with the pronominal -dhaaka are equivalent in meaning to a locative demonstrative phrase, e.g., “that year,” “that day.”

4.3.1.1 ʔaan-a-dhaaka آنذاك ‘AT THAT TIME’

أطلق كتابه آنذاك تياراً من الاهتمام.

ʔaTlaq-a kitaab-u-hu ʔaan-a-dhaaka tayyaar-an min-a l-ihtimaam-i.

His book set off a wave of interest **at that time**.

قال آنذاك إنهم على وشك التوصل إلى الاتفاق.

qaal-a ʔaan-a-dhaaka ʔinna-hum ʿalaa washk-i l-tawaSSul-i ʔilaa l-ittifaaq-i.

He said **at that time** that they were on the verge of arriving at the agreement.

4.3.1.2 yawm-a-dhaaka يومذاك ‘THAT DAY’

انتهى الحادث يومذاك.

intahaa l-Hadath-u yawm-a-dhaaka.

The incident ended **that day**.

تحدثوا يومذاك عن الحدث.

taHaddath-uu yawm-a-dhaaka ʿan-i l-Hadath-i.

That day they spoke about the event.

4.3.1.3 *sanat-a-dhaaka* سَنَتَاكَ AND *'aam-a-dhaaka* عَامَاكَ 'THAT YEAR'

اكتشاف أمريكا سَنَتَاكَ كان الحدث الكبير.

iktishaaf-u 'amriikaa sanat-a-dhaaka kaan-a l-Hadath-a l-kabiir-a.

The discovery of America **that year** was the great event.

حققت عامَاكَ سبعة وعشرين بليون دولار.

Haqqaq-at 'aam-a-dhaaka sab'at-an wa-'ishriina bilyuun-a duulaar-in.

It realized **that year** 27 billion dollars.

4.3.2 *-'idhin* نذ – expressions

These are more common in literary Arabic than in day-to-day journalistic prose.

ba'd-a-'idhin بَعْدَنَ 'after that'

وبَعْدَنَ انتقل إلى دار ماهر.

wa-ba'da-'idhin intaqal-a 'ilaa daar-i maahir-in.

And **after that** he moved to Mahir's house.

4.4 Adverbial time phrases

A noun denoting either a point in time or a period of time may occur in the accusative to denote that it is functioning adverbially. The nouns may be indefinite or definite, depending on the structure. For an expression of time in general, the indefinite accusative is used:

يسعى ليلاً ونهاراً.

ya-s'aa layl-an wa-nahaar-an.

He hurries **night and day**.

For specific expressions of time the accusative may be used with demonstrative pronouns, the definite article, as first term of an *'iDaafa*, or in a prepositional phrase.

نجح هذه السنة في توقيع مثل هذا الاتفاق.

najaH-a haadhihi l-sanat-a fii tawqii'-i mithl-i haadhaa l-ittifaaq-i.

It succeeded **this year** in signing such an agreement.

جاءوا فجر يوم الاقتراع.

jaa'-uu fajr-a yawm-i l-iqtiraa'-i.

They came at dawn **on the day** of balloting.

اليوم الأحد الساعة الحادية عشرة صباحاً

al-yawm-a l-'aHad-a l-saa'at-a l-Haadiyat-a 'ashrat-a SabaaH-an

today, Sunday, at 11:00 in the morning

ألقي القبض عليه في غضون دقائق.

ʔulqiya l-qabD-u ʕalay-hi fii ghuDuun-i daqaaʔiq-a.

He was arrested **within minutes**.

إلى ندوة تعقد في مبنى البرلمان الأربعاء المقبل

ʔilaa nadwat-in tu-ʕqad-u fii mabnaa l-barlamaan-i l-ʔarbiʕaaʔ-a l-muqbil-a

to a session that will be held in the parliament building **next Wednesday**

5 Numerical adverbials

For the expression of points in sequence, as in an outline, the ordinal numbers are used in the accusative indefinite. For example:

<i>ʔawwal-an</i>	‘firstly’	أَوَّلًا
<i>thaaniy-an</i>	‘secondly’	ثَانِيًا
<i>thaalith-an</i>	‘thirdly’	ثَالِثًا
<i>ʔawwal-a l-ʔamr-i</i>	‘at first; the first thing’	أَوَّلَ الْأَمْرِ

6 Adverbial accusative of specification (*al-tamyiiz* التمييز)

This form of adverbial accusative is used to label, identify, or specify something previously referred to in the sentence.¹³ It specifies the nature of what has been mentioned by answering the question “in what way?” Often an equivalent English structure might include the terms “as” or “in terms of.”

هذا البلد الطيب أرضاً وناساً وثقافة

haadhaa l-balad-u l-Tayyib-u ʔarD-an wa-naas-an wa-thaqaafat-an

this good country [in terms of] **land, people, and culture**

نقل ملكتها أسيرةً إلى روما.

naqal-a malikat-a-haa ʔasiirat-an ʔilaa ruumaa.

He transported its queen to Rome [as] a **prisoner**.

تحكم الغرب اقتصادياً وعسكرياً

taHakkum-u l-gharb-i qtiSaadiyy-an wa-ʕaskariyy-an

the dominance of the west **economically and militarily**

ونتيجة ذلك محرك أكثر كفاءة.

wa-natiijat-u dhaalika muHarrik-un ʔakthar-u kafaaʔat-an.

The result of that is a **more efficient motor**.

¹³ See also Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.7.

6.1 Other uses of *tamyiiz*

The accusative of specification is also used with the following quantifying expressions:

6.1.1 The interrogative quantifier *kam* كم 'how much, how many'

The noun following *kam* كم is in the accusative singular.

كم طالباً في صفك؟

kam Taalib-an fii Saff-i-ka?

How many students are in your class?

كم فلماً شاهدتم؟

kam film-an shaahad-tum?

How many films did you ('all') see?

6.1.2 The counted singular noun after numerals 11-99

For more examples and discussion of this topic, see Chapter 15.¹⁴

عن سبعة عشر نائباً

'an sab'at-a 'ashar-a naa'ib-an

from seventeen representatives

عشرون قرشاً

'ishruuna qirsh-an

twenty piasters

أكثر من خمسة وخمسين фильماً

'akthar-u min xamsat-in wa-xamsiina film-an

more than fifty-five films

6.1.3 The periphrastic comparative

The expression of comparative or superlative quality with the comparative adjective *'akthar* allows comparison of qualities that do not fit into the comparative adjective (*'af 'al*) form.¹⁵

قد تكون أكثر أهمية.

qad ta-kuun-u 'akthar-a

'ahammiyyat-an.

It might be more important.

('greater in terms of importance')

هو أكثر دهاءً بكثير.

huwa 'akthar-u dahaa'-an bi-kathiir-in.

He is more shrewd by far.

من أجل شرق أوسط أكثر استقراراً

min 'ajl-i sharq-in 'awsaT-a 'akthar-a stiograar-an

for the sake of a more stable Middle East

7 Adverbial accusative of cause or reason (*al-maf'ul li-'ajl-i-hi* المفعول لأجله, *al-maf'ul la-hu* المفعول له)

In this adverbial structure, a verbal noun in the indefinite accusative is used to indicate the motive, reason, or purpose of the mentioned action. If the verbal

¹⁴ See also Chapter 15, sections 1.4, 1.5, 1.6. For an analysis of this function of the accusative and its treatment in traditional Arabic grammar, see Carter 1972.

¹⁵ See also Chapter 10, section 4.2.3.

noun has a preposition associated with it, that preposition remains as part of the structure.

تقديرًا لجهوده

taqdiir-an li-juhuud-i-hi

in appreciation of his efforts

تمهيداً لإحالتهم

tamhiid-an li-ḥaalat-i-him . . .

in preparation for their transfer

نتيجة للعجز الذي سيطر على الحكومة

natiijat-an li-l-ʿajz-i lladhii sayTar-a ʿalaa l-Hukuumat-i

as a result of the incapacity that dominated the government

بدأ عملية التمشيط بحثاً عن رجال المقاومة.

badaʿ-a ʿamaliyyat-a l-tamshiiT-i baHth-an ʿan rijaal-i l-muqaawamat-i.

It started a combing operation to search for ('men of') resistance.

بحث تطوير العلاقات خدمة لمصلحتهما المشتركة.

buHith-a taTwiiir-u l-ʿalaaqaat-i xidmat-an li-maSlaHat-i-himaa l-mushtarakat-i.

Development of relations was discussed in order to serve their [two] shared interest.

8 Adverbs as speech acts

A few Arabic adverbs are used both in speech and in writing to function as *performatives*, that is, to accomplish acts such as thanking, welcoming, pardoning, and so forth. A number of these are words and phrases in the indefinite accusative. These include:

'thank you'

shukr-an

شكراً

'pardon; you're welcome'

ʿafw-an

عفواً

'welcome'

ʾahl-an wa-sahl-an

أهلاً وسهلاً

'hello'

marHab-an

مرحباً

Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to persons or entities and stand on their own as substitutes for nouns or noun phrases. This word class fills a wide range of roles in Arabic and consists of three groups: subject, object, and possessive pronouns. The first group, subject pronouns, are independent, separate words; the other two groups both take the form of suffixes.

The personal pronouns show differences in gender (masculine and feminine), number (singular, dual, plural), and person (first, second, and third). However, the number of categories of personal pronouns in Arabic is larger than in English (12 as opposed to 8) because it includes both masculine and feminine forms of the second and third person, and it also includes the dual pronouns.

1 Independent personal pronouns (*Damaa'ir munfaSila* ضمائر منفصلة)

The independent pronouns are also referred to as subject pronouns since they can serve as the subjects of verbs or of equational sentences and they correspond to the set of English subject pronouns. They are as follows:¹

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أنا 'I' ʾanaa		نحن 'we' naHn-u
Second person Masculine	أنت 'you' ʾanta	أنتما 'you two' ʾantumaa	أنتم 'you' ʾantum
Feminine	أنت 'you' ʾanti		أنتن 'you' ʾantunna

¹ There is no neutral pronoun "it," since there is no neutral gender in Arabic. Everything is referred to as either masculine or feminine. Note that the third person feminine singular pronoun, in keeping with the agreement rules of Arabic, is used to refer to nonhuman plurals.

	Singular	Dual	Plural
Third person Masculine	هُوَ 'he' <i>huwa</i>	هُمَا 'they two' <i>humaa</i>	هُمْ 'they' <i>hum</i>
Feminine	هِيَ 'she' <i>hiya</i>		هُنَّ 'they' <i>hunna</i>

The masculine plural pronouns *'antum* أَنْتُمْ and *hum* هُمْ end with *sukuun*, which means that they require a helping vowel if they are followed directly by a cluster of two or more consonants (often the case with a following word that starts with the definite article). That helping vowel is *Damma*, based on a principle of vowel harmony with the previous vowel.

هُمْ الْمُسْلِمُونَ.

hum-u l-muslim-uuna.

They are the Muslims.

هُمْ الْمُخْتَرِعُونَ لِلشَّطْرَنْجِ.

hum-u l-muxtari'uuna li-l-shaTranj-i.

They are the inventors of chess.

1.1 Independent personal pronouns: functions

This form of the pronoun is used in a number of different ways, sometimes as an essential part of a clause and sometimes as a nonessential part.

1.1.1 To emphasize the subject of a verb

Because Arabic verbs incorporate the subject into their inflections, the independent personal pronoun is not necessary to mark the subject of a verb phrase.² However, the pronoun may be used along with the verb in order to fortify or emphasize the subject. In the following sentences, the independent pronoun could be omitted and the sentence would still be grammatically correct; however, the emphasis on the subject would be reduced.

وَهُوَ لَا يَبْدُو مُتَفَائِلًا.

*wa-hwa laa ya-bduu mutafaa'il-an.*³

He does not seem optimistic.

سَيَكُونُ هُوَ الْمِفْتَاحَ الصَّحْرِيَّ.

sa-ya-kuun-u huwa l-miftaah-a l-siHriyy-a.

It will be the magic key.

أَنَا لَا أَقْدِرُ.

'anaa laa 'a-qdar-u.

I cannot.

كَانَتْ هِيَ نَقْطَةَ التَّحْوِيلِ.

kaan-at hiya nuqTat-a l-taHawwal-i

It was the turning point.

² Arabic is a "pro-drop" language; i.e., it is a language that allows a separate pronominal subject to be left unexpressed. This feature results in the verb inflectional paradigm distinguishing all persons uniquely. See Chapter 21 on verb inflection, esp. note 1.

³ When preceded by the conjunctions *wa-* or *fa-*, the third person singular pronouns *huwa* and *hiya* may lose their first vowel, thus becoming *wa-hwa* وَهُوَ and *wa-hya* وَهِيَ.

أحاول أنا أن أدافع عنها.

^uHaawil-u ^{anaa} ^{an} ^udaafi^c-a ^{an}-haa.

I try to defend it.

1.1.2 Subject of an equational sentence

Equational or verbless sentences do not have an overt verb, but they may show a subject through use of a pronoun. Used in this way, the pronoun is usually the first element in the sentence.

هو خبير في شؤون الشرق الأوسط.

huwa xabiir-un fii shu^uun-i l-sharq-i l-^{awsa}T-i.

He is an expert in Middle Eastern affairs.

أنت صديقتي.

^{anti} Sadiiqat-ii.

You (f.) are my friend.

هي ذكية.

hiya dhakiyyat-un.

She is intelligent.

أنا محظوظة في ذلك المجال.

^{anaa} maHZuuZat-un fii dhaalika l-majaa*l-i.*

I am fortunate in that field.

نحن عاشقان.

naHnu ^{aashiq}-aani.

We are lovers.

1.1.3 Predicate of equational sentence

Less common is the use of a subject pronoun as the predicate of an equational sentence; for example,

هذا هو.

haadhaa huwa.

This is he.

أنت هي.

^{anti} hiyya.

You are she.

1.1.4 As a copula

In order to clarify the relationship between the subject and predicate of an equational sentence, especially when the predicate is a definite noun or noun phrase, a **third person subject pronoun** may be inserted between the subject and predicate as a way of linking these two parts of the sentence, and as a substitute for the verb “to be.” When functioning in this manner, it is said to be a **copula**.⁴

الشيء الوحيد المزعج هو الأسعار.

al-shay^u-u l-waHiid-u l-muz^cij-u

huwa l-^{as}aar-u.

The one disturbing thing is the prices.

المهم هو العودة.

al-muhimm-u huwa l-^{awdat}-u.

The important [thing] is to return.

⁴ As Hurford puts it, “In English, a copula is any form of the verb *be* used as a ‘link’ or ‘coupling’ between its subject and a following phrase. The link either expresses identity or describes some property or attribute of the subject (*Copula* is Latin for *link*.)” 1994, 51. Because the verb “to be” in Arabic is not expressed overtly in present tense indicative sentences, an independent pronoun sometimes serves that purpose. For an excellent analysis of the Arabic pronoun copula, see Eid 1991.

المسلم هو التركي.

al-muslim-u huwa l-turkiyy-u.

The Muslim is the Turk.

تلك هي الأجواء السائدة في الحزب.

tilka hiya l-³ajwaa³-u l-saa³idat-u fii l-Hizb-i.

These are the atmospheres prevailing in the party.

2 Suffix personal pronouns (*Damaa'ir muttaSila* ضمائر متصلة)

There are two sets of suffix pronouns, one set indicates **possession** (possessive pronouns) and is suffixed to nouns, and the other set indicates the *object of a verb* or *object of a preposition* (object pronouns).

Although the two sets are different in their distribution and in their meanings, in form they are almost exactly alike. The only formal difference between them is in the first person singular pronoun ('my' or 'me'), which when it indicates possession and is suffixed to a noun, is /-ii/, but when it indicates the object of a verb is -nii نني.

2.1 Possessive pronoun suffixes

These suffixes are attached to nouns to show possession. They agree with the gender and number of the possessor (as in English), not the thing possessed (as in French).

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	ي 'my' -ii		نا 'our' -naa
Second person Masculine	كَ 'your' -ka	كُما 'your' -kumaa	كُم 'your' -kum
Feminine	كِ 'your' -ki		كُنَّ 'your' -kunna
Third person Masculine	هُ ~ هِ 'his' -hu ~ -hi	هُما 'their' -humaa ~ -himaa	هُم ~ هُمْ 'their' -hum ~ -him
Feminine	هَا 'her' -haa		هُنَّ ~ هُنَّ 'their' -hunna ~ -hinna

These suffixes are attached at the end of a noun, **after the case-marking vowel**, except for the suffix -ii 'my' which supercedes any inflectional vowel.⁵ A noun with a pronoun suffix is considered definite, the suffix acting like the second term of an annexation structure to define the noun. When a personal pronoun suffix is used, the noun cannot have the definite article (it is definite by virtue of

⁵ Note that all the pronoun suffixes except -ii start with a consonant; that is why they can follow directly after a vowel. Since /-ii/ consists of a long vowel only, it cannot follow or combine with another vowel. Instead, it replaces any short inflectional vowel.

the suffix) and it does not have nunation (because it is definite rather than indefinite).

Note that words ending in *taa'* *marbuuTa* and pronounced with a final /-a/ in pause form shift their spelling to a regular *taa'* when they are suffixed with a personal pronoun, since the *taa'* is no longer final.

حافظوا على نظافة مدينتكم!

HaafiZ-uu 'alaa naZaafat-i madiinat-i-kum!

Keep your (m. pl.) city clean ('preserve the cleanliness of your city')!

عن إذنك

'an 'idhn-i-ki

with your (f.) permission

من فضلك

min faDl-i-ka

please ('of your kindness')

(when requesting something)

في محفظتك

fii miHfaZat-i-ka

in your (m. sg.) wallet

أضم صوتي إلى صوتك.

'a-Dumm-u Sawt-ii 'ilaa Sawt-i-ka.

I add my voice to yours (your voice).

من شمالها إلى جنوبها

min shimaal-i-haa 'ilaa junuub-i-haa

from its north to its south

في بيئاتها الطبيعية

fii bii'aat-i-haa l-Tabii'iyyat-i

in their natural environments

كل ريال من دخلنا

kull-u riyaaal-in min daxl-i-naa

every riyal of our income

علماءه وجنوده

'ulamaa'-u-hu wa-junuud-u-hu

its scholars and its soldiers

2.1.1 Vowel shift pronouns

The third person suffix pronouns that include the sequence *-hu* (*-hu*, *-humaa*, *-hum*, *-hunna*) are affected by any front vowel (*-i* or *-ii*) or *yaa'* that precedes them. Their *-u* vowel shifts to *-i* in vowel harmony with the preceding sound. Other vowels (*-a* or *-u*) do not affect these suffixes:

في مذكراته

fii mudhakkiraat-i-hi

in his notes/diary

على كتفيه

'alaa katif-ay-hi

on his [two] shoulders

أكرما والديهما

'akram-aa waalid-ay-himaa

They [two] honored their [two] parents.

بسياراتهم

bi-sayyaaraat-i-him

in their cars

بتسويق إنتاجهم

bi-taswiq-i ʔintaaj-i-hinna

by marketing their (f. pl.) production

من جيوبهم

min juyuub-i-him

from their pockets

2.1.2 Plural pronoun suffix helping vowel

The masculine plural pronoun suffixes, *-kum* and *-hum/-him*, end with a *sukuun*, which means that they need a helping vowel if followed directly by a cluster of two or more consonants. That vowel is *Damma*, based on a principle of vowel harmony with the previous vowel. If the third person plural suffix pronoun shifts from *-hum* to *-him*, the helping vowel may be either *Damma* or *kasra*.⁶

تتناول أفلامهم الأخيرة.

ta-tanaawal-u ʔaflaam-a-hum-u l-ʔaxiirat-a.

It deals with **their** latest films.

من سياستهم الخارجية

min siyaasat-i-him-i l-xaarijiyyat-i

from **their** foreign policy

أساتذة بلباسهم التقليدي

ʔasaatidhat-un bi-libaas-i-him-i l-taqliidiyy-i

professors with (wearing) **their** traditional regalia ('clothes')

2.1.3 Noun + pronoun suffix + adjective

When a noun plus pronoun suffix is modified by an attributive adjective, that adjective is definite and carries the definite article because the noun is considered definite. The adjective also agrees in number, gender, and case with the modified noun.

بدأ مؤتمره الصحفي.

badaʔ-a muʔamar-a-hu l-SiHaafiyy-a.

He began his news conference.

في عالمنا العربي

fii ʕalam-i-naa l-ʕarabiyy-i

in our Arab world

في فيلمه الجديد

fii fiilm-i-hi l-jadiid-i

in his new film

في زيارته الرسمية الأخيرة

fii ziyaarat-i-hi l-rasmiyyat-i

l-ʔaxiirat-i

on his last official visit

في محاولته الأولى

fii muHaawalat-i-hi l-ʔuulaa

on his first try

في جيبك الداخلي

fii jayb-i-ka l-daaxiliyy-i

in your inside pocket

⁶ In this text, the principle of vowel harmony is observed.

2.1.4 Pronoun suffixes on dual and sound masculine plural nouns

Nouns with the dual suffix (-aani/-ayni) or with the sound masculine plural suffix (-uuna/-iina) drop the *nuun* when a pronoun suffix is attached:

عنواناهما ‘unwaan-aa-humaa their two titles	سيطلب من ناخبيه التصويت. sa-ya-Thub-u min naaxib-ii-hi l-taSwiit-i. It will request its electors to vote.
بيديها bi-yad-ay-haa with her two hands	كان ملجأ لمتعبينا. kaan-a malja ² -an li-mut ^c ab-ii-naa. It was a refuge for our weary.
أحد مستشاريه ‘aHad-u mustashaar-ii-hi one of his advisors	من أصوات مؤيديه min ‘aSwaat-i mu ² ayyid-ii-hi from the votes of its supporters

2.1.4.1 SOUND MASCULINE PLURAL SUFFIX PLUS /-ii/ ‘MY’: The sound masculine plural (-uuna or -iina), as noted above, drops the *nuun* when a suffix pronoun is attached, leaving a long vowel /-uu/ or /-ii/. Because of restrictions on vowel combinations, adding the pronoun -ii causes a shift in these endings. They are shortened and combined into one, with a short vowel *kasra* (-i) followed by a double *yaa*² with *fatHa*: -iyya ي. Note that when (-ii) ‘my’ is suffixed to sound masculine plural nouns it overrides the case distinction and the plural is reduced to only one form.⁷

معلمي

mu^callim-iyya

my teachers (nominative and genitive/accusative)

معلمي مصريون.

mu^callim-iyya miSriyy-uuna.

My teachers are Egyptian.

ذهبت مع معلمي.

dhahab-tu ma^ca mu^callim-iyya.

I went with my teachers.

2.1.4.2 DUAL SUFFIX PLUS /-ii/: The dual suffix (-aani or -ayni) drops the *nuun* when a suffix pronoun is attached, leaving a long vowel -aa or the diphthong -ay. Owing to restrictions on the combination of two long vowels in Arabic, the long vowel suffix /-ii/ is shifted to /-ya/ in both cases: nominative -aaya اي and genitive/accusative -ayya ي.

⁷ This is due to incompatibility between the vowels /-uu/ and /-ii/, which do not combine in MSA.

والدائي

waalid-aaya

my [two] parents (nominative)

والدائي مصريان.

waalid-aaya miSriyy-aani.

My parents are Egyptian.

والديّ

waalid-ayya

my [two] parents (genitive/accusative)

ذهبت مع والديّ.

dhahab-tu ma^a waalid-ayya.

I went with my parents.

2.1.5 The five nouns plus /-ii/: ^aab, ^aax, fuu, Ham, dhuu)

These five nouns are a special subset of semantically primitive nouns that inflect for case with long vowels instead of short vowels whenever they have pronoun suffixes or when they are used as the first term of an ⁱDaafa (see Chapter 5, section 10.1.3). Except for *dhuu*, which does not take pronoun suffixes, when used with the possessive suffix /-ii/ 'my,' all three cases are neutralized into one form, with omission of the inflectional vowel, e.g.,

my father	^a ab-ii	أبي
my brother	^a ax-ii	أخي
my father-in-law	Ham-ii	حمي
my mouth	fiyya ⁸	فيّ

2.2 Object pronoun suffixes

Object pronouns are suffixes almost identical in form with the possessive pronoun suffixes. They serve as objects of transitive verbs and of prepositions and therefore are affixed to those word classes.

2.2.1 Pronoun objects of transitive verbs

This set of pronouns is as follows:

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	ني 'me' -nii		نا 'us' -naa
Second person Masculine	كَ 'you' -ka	كُما 'you' -kumaa	كُم 'you' -kum

⁸ Alternates with the variant word stem for 'mouth,' *fam*, as *fam-ii* فمي.

	Singular	Dual	Plural
Feminine	كِ 'you' -ki		كُنَّ 'you' -kunna
Third person Masculine	هُ ~ هِ 'him' -hu ~ -hi	هُمَا ~ هِمَا 'them' -humaa ~ -himaa	هُمْ ~ هُم 'them' -hum ~ -him
Feminine	هَا 'her' -haa		هُنَّ ~ هِنَّ 'them' -hunna ~ -hinna

These suffixes are attached at the end of a verb, after the verb inflection for person, number, gender, tense, and mood. Just as with possessive pronoun suffixes, the third person suffix pronouns that include the sequence -hu- (-hu, -humaa, -hum, -hunna) are affected by any front vowel (-i or -ii) or yaa' that precedes them. Their -u vowel shifts to -i in vowel harmony with the preceding sound. Other vowels (-a or -u) do not affect these suffixes.

أَشْكُرُ. <i>ʾa-shkur-u-ka.</i> I thank you.	نَعْتَبِرُهُمْ نَجُومًا. <i>na-ʿtabir-u-hum nujuum-an.</i> We consider them stars.	وَجَدْتُهَا. <i>wajad-tu-haa!</i> I found it!
اخْتَارَنِي. <i>ixtaar-a-nii.</i> He chose me.	اعْذِرْنِي. <i>i-ʿdhir-nii.</i> Forgive me/excuse me.	لَا تَسْتَخْدِمِهَا ! <i>laa ta-staxdim-ii-hi!</i> Don't (f. sg.) use it!
انْتَظَرْنَا. <i>intaZar-naa-hu.</i> We have waited for it.	أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَسَاعِدَكُمَا. <i>ʾu-riid-u ʾan u-saaʿid-a-kumaa</i> I want to help you two.	

2.2.1.1 SECOND PERSON PLURAL HELPING VOWEL: Whenever a pronoun suffix is attached to the second person masculine plural form of a past tense verb (ending in -tum), a long helping vowel -uu is inserted between the verb suffix and the pronoun object suffix.

هل هذا ما تعلمتموه في المدرسة؟ <i>hal haadhaa maa taʿallam-tum-uu-hu fii l-madrasat-i?</i> Is this what you (pl.) learned ('it') in school?	تركتمونا ! <i>tarak-tum-uu-naa!</i> You (pl.) left us!
---	--

2.2.1.2 WORD ORDER: Because of the pronoun object attaching directly to the verb, and the verb-initial word order in Arabic sentences, sometimes the object of a verb in Arabic comes before the mention of the subject.

يزوره ثلاثة ملايين سائح كل عام.

ya-zuur-u-hu thalaathat-u malaayi-in-i saa'iH-in kull-a 'aam-in.

Three million tourists **visit it** every year.

أعلنه اليونيسكو.

'a'lan-a-hu l-yuuniiskuu.

UNESCO **announced it**.

أخذها صديقك.

'axadh-a-haa Sadiiq-u-ka.

Your friend **took it**.

2.2.1.3 WORD = SENTENCE: If both subject and object are in pronoun form, the verb, its subject and object can create one word which constitutes a complete predication or sentence by itself:

(1) Past tense:

استقبلناهم.

istaqbal-naa-hum.

We met them.

أقنعوها.

'aqna'-uu-haa.

They persuaded her.

سمعته.

sami'-tu-hu.

I heard it.

أحببناه.

'aHbab-naa-hu.

We loved him.

(2) Present tense:

يحملها.

ya-Hmil-u-haa

He is carrying it.

يقدمونه.

yu-qaddis-uuna-hu.

They venerate it.

2.2.1.4 NOTE ABOUT WORD STRESS: Because suffix pronouns are attached to the ends of words, and because word stress is calculated by syllables from the end of a word, the suffixing of a personal pronoun lengthens a word and may cause a shift in stress when the words are spoken or pronounced out loud. (See stress rules in Chapter 2, section 7.) For example (stressed syllable is boldface):

	Pause form		Full form + pronoun suffix
policy	سياسة <i>siyaasa</i>	their policy	سياستهم <i>siyaasat-u-hum</i>
problem	مشكلة <i>mushkila</i>	her problem	مشكلتها <i>mushkilat-u-haa</i>
world	عالم <i>'aalam</i>	our world	عالمننا <i>'aalam-u-naa</i>
conference	مؤتمر <i>mu'tamar</i>	his conference	مؤتمره <i>mu'tamar-u-hu</i>
we waited	انتظرنا <i>intaZar-naa</i>	we waited for him	انتظرناه <i>intaZar-naa-hu</i>

2.2.2 Object pronoun carrier: *إِيَّا* ^ʔ*ʔiyyaa-*

Rarely, in MSA, a pronoun object of a verb will occur and not be attached to the verb. This may happen if the verb is one that takes a double object (direct and indirect) and both of the objects are pronouns, or it may occur as a stylistic choice. For these cases, there is a word that acts as a pronoun-carrier, ^ʔ*ʔiyyaa-*, and object pronouns can be attached to it.⁹

2.2.2.1 VERB THAT TAKES DOUBLE ACCUSATIVE:

أهداني إياها أهل صديقي.	أعطيني إياه.
^ʔ <i>ahdaa-nii</i> ^ʔ <i>ʔiyyaa-haa</i> ^ʔ <i>ahl-u Sadiiq-ii</i> .	^ʔ <i>a</i> ^ʔ <i>Tii-nii</i> ^ʔ <i>ʔiyyaa-hu</i> .
My friend's family presented it to me (‘sent-me it’).	Give (f.) it [to] me (‘give me it’).

2.2.2.2 STYLISTIC CHOICE: In the following example, the writer could have said ‘*taHaddath-a ma^ʔ-a-hu*,’ but he chose a more classical turn of phrase, using the expression *wa-^ʔʔiyyaa-hu* instead. In this case, *wa-* is a connector which takes the accusative case (*waaw al-ma^ʔʔiyya*) on a following noun, signifying concomitance or accompaniment.¹⁰ Since a pronoun object is needed here, *wa-* is followed by ^ʔ*ʔiyyaa-hu*.

تحدث وإياه مطولا.
<i>taHaddath-a wa-^ʔʔiyyaa-hu muTawwil-an</i> .
He talked with him for a long time.

2.3 Pronoun objects of prepositions and semi-prepositions

Prepositions may take pronoun objects. The form of the object pronouns of prepositions is almost exactly identical to the pronoun objects of verbs.¹¹

As objects of prepositions, the suffix pronouns attach directly onto the preposition itself. Sometimes a spelling change is required, however.

This subset of pronouns is as follows:

⁹ See Wright 1967, I:103–104 for more on the use of ^ʔ*ʔiyyaa-*. Note also that in Classical Arabic it was possible to have both direct and indirect objects as suffixes on the verb. Lecomte states (1968, 106): “La langue ancienne, surtout poétique, admettait l’agglutination des pronoms dans l’ordre des personnes 1+2+3: ^ʔ*a*^ʔ*Tay-tu-ka-hu* je te l’ai donné; depuis l’époque classique, le second pronom s’affiche toujours à une particule-outil ^ʔ*ʔiyyaa-*.”

¹⁰ For more on *waaw al-ma^ʔʔiyya* see Baalbaki 1986 and Wright 1967, II:83–84.

¹¹ Note, however that the prepositions *Hattaa*, *ka-*, and *mundh-u* do not take pronoun objects.

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	سِي ~ نِي 'me' -nii ~ -ii		نَا 'us' -naa
Second person Masculine	كَ 'you' -ka	كُمَا 'you two' -kumaa	كُم 'you' -kum
Feminine	كِ 'you' -ki		كُنَّ 'you' -kunna
Third person Masculine	هُ ~ هِ 'him' -hu ~ -hi	هُمَا ~ هُمَا '[the two of] them' -humaa ~ -himaa	هُمْ ~ هُم 'them' -hum ~ -him
Feminine	هَا 'her' -haa		هُنَّ ~ هُنَّ 'them' -hunna ~ -hinna

2.3.1 One-letter prepositions: *bi* and *li*:-

2.3.1.1 *bi*- + PRONOUN SUFFIX: Pronoun suffixes with *bi*- 'with, at, to, in' are regular, except for the third person "vowel-shift" pronouns (see 2.1.1), which are affected by the *kasra* of *bi*- and shift their -u vowel to -i:

أَهْلًا بِكَ. °ahl-an <i>bi</i> -ka. Welcome to you.	ثَقَّتْنَا بِهِمْ thiqat-u-naa <i>bi</i> -him our confidence in them	لَا بِأَسَ بِهِ lāa ba°s-a <i>bi</i> -hi not bad (‘there is no harm in it’)
--	--	--

2.3.1.2 *li*- → *la*- PLUS PRONOUN SUFFIX: The preposition *li*- 'to, for' shifts its vowel to -a whenever it has a pronoun suffix, except for the long vowel suffix -ii 'me,' which supercedes any short vowel:

الشَّرَفُ لَنَا. al-sharaf-u <i>la</i> -naa The honor is ours ('to us').	لَكَ سَعْرٌ خَاصٌّ. la-ka si°r-un xaaSS-un. For you, a special price.	هَنِيئًا لَكُمْ. hanii°-an <i>la</i> -kum. Congratulations to you (pl.).
--	---	--

لَا مَعْنَى لَهُ. lāa ma°naa <i>la</i> -hu. It is meaningless ('there is no meaning to it').	أَرْسَلُوا لِي طَرْدًا. °arsal-uu l-ii Tard-an. They sent [to] me a package.
--	--

لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ أَيُّ اتِّصَالٍ.
lam ya-kun *la*-hum °ayy-u ittiSaal-in.
They did not have any contact ('there was not to them any contact').

2.3.2 Two-letter prepositions: *fii*, *min*, *‘an*

2.3.2.1 *fii* + PRONOUN SUFFIX: The preposition *fii* ‘in, at, into,’ because it ends in a long vowel *-ii*, undergoes a slight change when suffixed with the first person object pronoun *-ii*; the two long vowels merge into each other and become a *yaa*’ with a *shadda* on it, followed by the short vowel *fatHa*: *fiyya* **فِي**. In writing it is sometimes hard to tell the difference between *fii* and *fiyya*, but there is often a marked *shadda* added to the *yaa*’ when *fiyya* is intended.

Otherwise, pronouns simply follow the long *-ii*, with the “vowel shift pronouns” changing their *-u* vowel to *-i*:

أَذَابَ الْحَزْنَ فِيَّ.

ʾadhaab-a l-huzn-a *fiyya*.

It dissolved the sorrow **in me**.

فِيهِ شَمْسٌ جَبَلِيَّةٌ.

fii-hi shams-un jabaliyyat-un.

There’s a mountain sun there (**‘in it’**).

2.3.2.2 *min* + PRONOUN SUFFIX: The preposition *min* ‘of; from; than’ is fairly regular in its shape when pronoun suffixes are attached, except that when suffixed with the pronoun *-ii* ‘me,’ the *nuun* in *min* doubles, so that instead of **min-ii*, the phrase ‘from me’ or ‘than me’ becomes *min-nii*.

أَحْسَنَ مِنِّي

ʾaHsan-u *min-nii*

better **than I**

كَثِيرُونَ مِنْهُمْ

kathiir-uuna *min-hum*

many **of them**

هِيَ أَكْثَرُ مَسْئُولِيَّةٍ مِنْهُ.

hiya ʾakthar-u masʾuuliyyat-an *min-hu*.

She is more responsible **than he is**.

إِثْنَتَانِ مِنْهَا

ithnataani *min-haa*

two **of them**

2.3.2.3 *‘an* + PRONOUN SUFFIX: Like *min*, the preposition *‘an* ‘away from; from; about; of’ maintains its shape when pronoun suffixes are attached, except that when suffixed with the pronoun *-ii* ‘me,’ the *nuun* in *‘an* doubles, so that instead of **‘an-ii*, the phrase ‘from me’ or ‘away from me’ becomes *‘an-nii*.

هَلْ سَأَلْتُمْ عَنِّي؟

hal saʾal-tum *‘an-nii*?

Did you (pl.) ask **about me**?

الإِعْلَانُ عَنْهُ

al-ʾiʿlaan-u *‘an-hu*.

the announcing **of it**

مَا قِيلَ وَمَا سَيُقَالُ عَنْهُمْ

maa qil-a wa-maa sa-yu-qaal-u *‘an-hum*

what has been said and what will be said **about them**

2.3.3 Defective three-letter prepositions: *ʾilaa*, *ʿalaa* and semi-preposition *ladaa*

These three words are put in one category because they all have a final *ʾalif maq-Suura*, and all of them shift this *ʾalif* to a *yaaʾ* preceded by *fatHa* whenever they receive pronoun suffixes. Thus the attachable stem for *ʾilaa* is *ʾilay-*; for *ʿalaa* it is *ʿalay-* and for *ladaa*, *laday-*.

The shift to *yaaʾ* has an effect on certain pronoun suffixes. The “vowel-shift” pronouns change their *-u* vowel to *-i*, and the first person singular suffix *-ii* ‘me’ merges with the *yaaʾ* of the preposition stem, creating a double *yaaʾ*, which is followed by *fatHa*. A model paradigm using *ʿalaa* is presented here.

2.3.3.1 *ʿalaa* + PRONOUN SUFFIX

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	عليّ <i>ʿalay-ya</i>		علينا <i>ʿalay-naa</i>
Second person Masculine	عليك <i>ʿalay-ka</i>	عليكما <i>ʿalay -kumaa</i>	عليكم <i>ʿalay-kum</i>
Feminine	عليكِ <i>ʿalay-ki</i>		عليكن <i>ʿalay-kunna</i>
Third person Masculine	عليه <i>ʿalay-hi</i>	عليهما <i>ʿalay -himaa</i>	عليهم <i>ʿalay-him</i>
Feminine	عليها <i>ʿalay-haa</i>		عليهن <i>ʿalay-hinna</i>

كان عليّ
kaan-a ʿalay-ya
it was [incumbent] on me

السلام عليكم.
al-salaam-u ʿalay-kum.
Peace [be] upon you.

كانت الأوضاع أفضل مما هي عليه الآن.
kaan-at-i l-ʾawDaaʿ-u ʾafDal-a mimmaa hiya ʿalay-hi l-ʾaan-a.
The conditions were better than what they are (‘on it’) now.

2.3.3.2 *ʾilaa* + PRONOUN SUFFIX

ينظر إليها.
ya-nZur-u ʾilay-haa.
He looks at her.

أنا أشتاق إليه.
ʾanaa ʾa-shtaaq-u ʾilay-hi.
I miss him (‘I yearn for him’).

2.3.3.3 *ladaa* + PRONOUN SUFFIX

لا مستقبل لدي.

laa mustaqbal-a laday-ya.

I have no future ('there is no future for me').

لديه المستندات الرسمية.

laday-hi l-mustanadaat-u l-rasmiyyat-u.

He has the official documents.

2.3.4 Semi-prepositions + pronoun suffixes

The locative adverbs or semi-prepositions may also take pronoun suffixes.

أثار حملة من الانتقادات ضده.

ʾathaar-a Hamlat-an min-a l-intiqaadaat-i Didd-a-hu.

It aroused a campaign of criticisms against him.

على الأرض وفوقها

ʿalaa l-ʾarḍ-i wa-fawq-a-haa

on the earth and over it

عندي مشكلة.

ʿind-ii mushkilat-un.

I have ('at-me') a problem.

3 Reflexive expressions with *nafs* plus pronouns

Reflexive expressions in Arabic often use the noun *nafs* 'self; same' plus a pronoun suffix, the pronoun referring back to the subject of the verb.

يجدد نفسه.

yu-jaddid-u nafs-a-hu.

It renews itself.

يستطيعون أن يفرضوا أنفسهم على المستوى العالمي.

ya-staTiiʿ-uuna ʾan ya-friḍ-uu ʾanfus-a-hum ʿalaa l-mustawaa l-ʿaalamiyy-i.

They can impose themselves on the world level.

4 Independent possessive pronoun: *dhuu* + noun

This pronoun refers to the possessor or owner of something and is used for expressing descriptive concepts where English would use the word "of" plus a noun, such as "of importance" "of means." It is also used for descriptive terms such as "bald-headed" or "two-humped" when describing creatures in terms of their distinctive features. It is used chiefly in conjunction with a noun, as first term of an *ʾiDaafa* with that noun. Occasionally it is followed by a pronoun suffix. The masculine form, *dhuu*, is inflected as one of the "five nouns" whose final vowel is also their inflectional vowel.¹² The feminine form, *dhaat*, inflects separately. Both paradigms are presented here.¹³

¹² See Chapter 7, section 5.4.1.c.

¹³ There are several variants of this pronoun, but only the most commonly used forms in contemporary Arabic are presented here. See Wright 1967, I:265–66 for greater detail on the Classical Arabic forms of this pronoun.

'possessor of' (masculine) ذو <i>dhuu</i>			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
Nominative	ذو <i>dhuu</i>	ذَوَا <i>dhawaa</i>	ذَوُو <i>dhawuu</i>
Genitive	ذي <i>dhii</i>	ذَوَي <i>dhaway</i>	ذَوِي <i>dhawii</i>
Accusative	ذا <i>dhaa</i>	ذَوَي <i>dhaway</i>	ذَوِي <i>dhawii</i>

'possessor of' (feminine) ذات <i>dhaat</i>			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
Nominative	ذاتُ <i>dhaat-u</i>	ذاتَا ~ ذواتا <i>dhawaataa ~ dhaataa</i>	ذواتُ <i>dhawaat-u</i>
Genitive	ذات <i>dhaat-i</i>	ذَاتِي ~ ذَوَاتِي <i>dhawaatay ~ dhaatay</i>	ذوات <i>dhawaat-i</i>
Accusative	ذاتَ <i>dhaat-a</i>	ذَاتِي ~ ذَوَاتِي <i>dhawaatay ~ dhaatay</i>	ذوات <i>dhawaat-i</i>

4.1 Masculine

النسر ذو الرأس الأبيض
al-nasr-u dhuu l-ra's-i l-ʔabyaD-i
the bald-headed eagle ('white-headed')

الجمال ذو السنامين
al-jamal-u dhuu l-sanaam-ayni
the two-humped camel

لذوي الدخل المحدود
li-dhawii l-daxl-i l-maHduud-i
for those [people] of limited incomes

سافر بعيدا عن ذويه.
saafar-a baʕiid-an ʕan dhawii-hi.
He traveled far from his kin ('those of his').

4.2 Feminine

The feminine singular possessive pronoun (*dhaat*) is of frequent occurrence because of its use with nonhuman plurals.¹⁴

¹⁴ Note that this instance of *dhaat* is not the same as the demonstrative use of *dhaat* (e.g., *dhaat-a yawm-in* 'one day') (see Chapter 13, section 4.2) or the substantive *dhaat* used to express "self" or "same" (e.g., *madH-u l-dhaat-i* 'self-praise') (see Chapter 9, section 5.1.2).

وصف المحادثات بأنها ذات قيمة.

waSaf-a l-muHaadathaat-i bi-'anna-haa dhaat-u qiimat-in.

He described the talks as worthwhile ('of worth').

مصادر ذات علاقة بالموضوع

maSaadir-u dhaat-u 'alaaqat-in bi-l-mawDuu^c-i

sources that have a relationship with the subject

قال إن النتائج ستكون ذات أهمية.

qaal-a 'inna l-nataa'ij-a sa-ta-kuun-u dhaat-a 'ahammiyyat-in.

He said that the results will be of importance.

Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns (أَسْمَاءُ الْإِشَارَةِ *'asmaa' al-'ishaara*) are determiners used with nouns or instead of nouns to show either distance from or proximity to the speaker, like “this” and “that” in English. English has four demonstrative pronouns: “this,” “that,” “these,” and “those.” Arabic has a richer variety of demonstratives. In fact, Classical Arabic has a complex system of sets and subsets of demonstratives,¹ but in Modern Standard Arabic, the most commonly used ones are described as follows.

1 Demonstrative of proximity: ‘this; these’ هذا *haadhaa*

The demonstrative pronoun meaning ‘this’ or ‘these’ shows differences in gender and number, as well as inflection for case in the dual:

	Masculine	Feminine
Singular	هذا <i>haadhaa</i>	هذه <i>haadhihi</i>
Dual Nominative	هذان <i>haadh-aani</i>	هاتان <i>haat-aani</i>
Genitive/accusative	هذين <i>haadh-ayni</i>	هاتين <i>haat-ayni</i>
Plural	هؤلاء <i>haa'ulaa'i</i>	هؤلاء <i>haa'ulaa'i</i>

Note that the plural demonstrative has no gender distinction and is used only when referring to human beings. For referring to nonhuman plurals, the feminine singular demonstrative is used.

¹ More extensive paradigms of demonstrative variants are provided in Wright 1967, I:264-70; Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 80-81; Thatcher 1942, 53-55; Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 200-203.

2 Demonstrative of distance: ‘that; those’ ذاك *dhaalika*

The demonstrative of distance “that” and “those” inflects for gender and number but is rarely used in the dual in MSA. These forms of the demonstrative are invariable and do not inflect for case.

	Masculine	Feminine
Singular	ذَٰكَ <i>dhaalika</i>	تَٰكَ <i>tilka</i>
Plural	أُولَٰئِكَ <i>’uulaa’ika</i>	أُولَٰئِكَ <i>’uulaa’ika</i>

3 Functions of demonstratives

The demonstrative pronouns can be used independently, in phrases, or in clauses.

3.1 Independent use

A demonstrative can stand by itself as a noun substitute:

نجح في ذلك. <i>najaH-a fii dhaalika.</i> He succeeded in that .	على رغم ذلك <i>’alaa raghm-i dhaalika</i> despite that
حدث عن ذلك كله. <i>Haddath-a ‘an dhaalika kull-i-hi.</i> He spoke about all that .	لكن هذا لا يكفي. <i>laakinn-a haadhaa laa ya-kfii.</i> But this is not enough.
معنى هذا <i>ma’naa haadhaa</i> the meaning of this	أقول هذا عن خبرة عملية. <i>’a-quul-u haadhaa ‘an xibrat-in ‘amaliyyat-in.</i> I say this from practical experience.

3.2 Demonstrative phrases

In a demonstrative phrase, the demonstrative pronoun forms a syntactic unit with a definite noun in order to convey the concept of particular proximity or distance. These pronouns are considered determiners of nouns (in some ways like the definite article).

In Arabic, the demonstrative phrase consists of a demonstrative pronoun + definite article + noun, as follows:

<i>haadhaa + l- + lawn-u</i>	= <i>haadhaa l-lawn-u</i>	هذا اللون
‘this-the-color’	= this color	

haadhihi + l + ziyaarat-u = haadhihi l-ziyaarat-u هذه الزيارة
 'this-the-visit' = this visit

haa'ulaa'i + l + naas-u = haa'ulaa'i l-naas-u هؤلاء الناس
 'these + the + people' = these people

Unlike English, then, the demonstrative phrase includes the definite article with the noun. If there is a modifying adjective, it follows the noun and agrees with it in gender, number, case and definiteness.

أثار هذا الكتاب اهتماما. ^o athaar-a haadhaa l-kitaab-u htimaam-an. This book aroused interest.	في هذه المرحلة fii haadhihi l-marHalat-i at this stage
في هذا الصدد fii haadhaa l-Sadad-i in this connection	من هذه المناطق min haadhihi l-manaaTiq-i from these regions
في هذه الانتخابات fii haadhihi l-intixaabaat-i in these elections	هؤلاء الأشراف haa'ulaa'i l-'ashraaf-u these distinguished people
نقد موجه إلى أولئك الوزراء naqd-un muwajjah-un 'ilaa 'uulaa'ika l-wuzaraa'-i a criticism directed toward those ministers	هؤلاء المسؤولين haa'ulaa' i l-mas'uul-uuna these officials

3.3 Demonstrative with second term of ^oiDaafa

The bond between the demonstrative pronoun and its noun is so tight that a demonstrative phrase is allowed to be used as the second term of an ^oiDaafa.²

قيمة هذه المخدرات qiimat-u haadhihi l-muxaddiraat-i the value of these drugs	تدمير تلك الفيروسات tadmiir-u tilka l-firuusaat-i the destruction of those viruses
--	--

3.4 Demonstrative with first term of ^oiDaafa

If a demonstrative is needed for the first term of an ^oiDaafa, it must follow the whole ^oiDaafa. It cannot attach itself to the first term of the ^oiDaafa because it must be followed by a noun with the definite article, whereas the first term of

² Normally, an ^oiDaafa cannot be interrupted by any word between the two nouns joined in the annexation structure.

an *'iDaafa* is stripped of the definite article and defined through the second term.

وجهة النظر هذه

wujhat-u l-naZar-i haadhihi

this point of view

مرحلة الجمود هذه

marHalat-u l-jumuud-i haadhihi

this stage of solidity

3.5 Demonstrative with possessed noun

A noun made definite by means of a suffixed possessive pronoun cannot be preceded by a demonstrative pronoun because in order to precede the noun, the demonstrative must be followed by the definite article. Since a noun with a possessive pronoun cannot have the definite article (it is definite by virtue of the suffix), the demonstrative follows:

في كتابه هذا

fii kitaab-i-hi haadhaa

in this book of his

تجربتي الأولى هذه

tajribat-ii l-'uulaa haadhihi

this first experience of mine

في منشوراتها هذه

fii manshuuraat-i-haa haadhihi

in these publications of hers

أهمية الاكتشافات الحديثة هذه

'ahammiyyat-u l-iktishaafaat-i l-Hadiithat-i

haadhihi

the importance of these new discoveries

3.6 Demonstratives with proper names

Proper names are considered definite even though many of them do not have a definite article. When referring to someone's name with a demonstrative, it follows the name:

كنت أشرت إلى خالد هذا.

kun-tu 'ashar-tu 'ilaa xaalid-in haadhaa.

I had referred to this 'Khalid.'

3.7 Demonstrative clauses

In a demonstrative clause, the demonstrative pronoun serves as the subject of the clause, followed by a complement or predicate. There is therefore a syntactic boundary between the demonstrative and the rest of the clause.

هذا قطي.

haadhaa qiTT-ii.

This [is] my cat.

وهذا اختلاف هام.

wa-haadhaa xtilaaf-un haamm-un.

('And') this [is] an important difference.

هذا رأي يناقض الحقائق.

haadhaa ra'y-un yu-naaqiD-u l-Haqaa'iq-a.

This [is] an opinion that contradicts the facts.

Most often, the predicate of a sentence or clause with a demonstrative as the subject is indefinite, or a definite noun with a pronoun suffix.

A noun with a definite article may serve as the predicate of an equational sentence, but if preceded by a demonstrative pronoun, there normally needs to be a copula or pronoun of separation between the demonstrative and the definite noun to show that there is a syntactic boundary between them, and that they do not form a phrase (see below).

3.8 Demonstrative clause with pronoun of separation (copula)

Here the predicate of the equational sentence is a noun with a definite article. In order to show clearly that there is a separation between a demonstrative pronoun subject and the definite noun, a personal pronoun is inserted at the boundary between subject and predicate to act as a copula or substitute for a verb of being.

هذا هو الكتاب.

haadhaa huwa l-kitaab-u.

This is the book.

تلك هي نقطة البداية.

tilka hiya nuqTat-u l-bidaayat-i.

That is the starting point.

تلك هي الأجواء السائدة في الحزب.

tilka hiya l-ʔajwaaʔ-u l-saaʔidat-u fii l-Hizb-i.

Those are the atmospheres prevailing
in the party.

تلك هي الأفكار.

tilka hiya l-ʔafkaar-u

Those are the ideas.

3.8.1 Omission of copula

Occasionally, the copula pronoun or pronoun of separation is omitted in the demonstrative clause, and the separation has to be deduced from the context.

هذه المرة الأولى التي يستقبل فيها الرئيس.

haadhihi l-marrat-u l-ʔuulaa llatii ya-staqabil-u fii-haa l-raʔiis-a.

This is the first time that he met the president.

كانت تلك المرة الأولى التي غادر فيها قريته.

kaan-at tilka l-marrat-a l-ʔuulaa llatii ghaadar-a fii-haa qaryat-a-hu.

This was the first time he had left his village.

4 Other demonstratives

4.1 *dhaaka* ذاك

The demonstrative *dhaaka* is a variant of *dhalika* and sometimes may be used to contrast with it.

4.1.1 As an independent word

تلك الشوفينية وذلك التعصب وذاك الانغلاق

tilka l-shuufiiniyyat-u wa-dhaalika l-ta'aSSub-u wa-dhaaka l-'inghilaq-u

that chauvinism, that tribalism, and that obscurity

كان ذاك بالأمس.

kaan-a dhaaka bi-l-'ams-i.

That was yesterday.

4.1.2 As a suffix

As a suffix on an accusative noun denoting 'time when':

انتهى الحدث يومذاك.

intahaa l-Hadath-u yawm-a-dhaaka.

The event ended that day.

وتحدثوا يومذاك.

wa-taHaddath-uu yawm-a-dhaaka.

They spoke that day.

وأطلق كتابه آنذاك تيارا من الاهتمام.

wa-'aTlaq-a kitaab-u-hu 'aan-a-dhaaka tayyaar-an min-a l-ihtimaam-i.

His book evoked a current of interest at that time.

اكتشاف أمريكا سنتذاك كان الحدث الكبير.

iktishaaf-u 'amriikaa sanat-a-dhaaka kaan-a l-Hadath-a l-kabiir-a.

The discovery of America that year was the great event.

4.2 Demonstrative *dhaat-a* ذات

This demonstrative indicates an indefinite distance in time or space and is used as the first term of an *'iDaafa* with an indefinite noun:

قبل أن تعرف ذات يوم أنها وارثة

qabl-a 'an ta-'rif-a dhaat-a yawm-in 'ann-a-haa waarithat-un

before she found out one day that she was an heiress

4.3 Use of *haa* ها 'this'

The word *haa* is sometimes used as a shortened form of *haadhaa*. It implies an immediate perception, something like English "behold."

ها هي دولتكم.

haa hiya dawlat-u-kum.

This is your country/ Here is your country.

4.4 Locative demonstrative pronouns: *hunaa* هنا, *hunaaka* هناك and *hunaalika* هنالك 'here', 'there' and '(over) there'

These words are considered both adverbs and locative demonstrative pronouns, since they denote a place close to, distant from, or very distant from the speaker.

They are used widely in both written and spoken Arabic. Some examples are found in Chapter 11 on adverbs. Here are some others:

4.4.1 Locative *hunaa* هنا 'here'

هنا في المدينة

hunaa fii l-madiiindat-i

here, in the city

هل أخذت المفتاح من هنا؟

hal 'axadh-ta l-miftaaH-a min hunaa?

Did you take the key from here?

مستحيل أن نجد أحدا هنا.

mustaHiil-un 'an na-jid-a 'aHad-an hunaa.

[It is] impossible to find ('that we find') anyone here.

4.4.2 Locative *hunaaka* هناك 'there'

الطائرة هناك.

al-Taa'irat-u hunaaka.

The plane is [over] there.

لا بد أن أكون هناك بعد خمس دقائق.

laa budd-a 'an 'a-kuun-a hunaaka ba'd-a xams-i daqaa'iq-a.

I have to be there in five minutes.

4.4.3 Existential *hunaaka* هناك and *hunaalika* هناك: 'there is, there are'

To convey the idea of existence Arabic uses the pronoun/adverb *hunaaka* 'there' paralleling the English use of "there is, there are." Occasionally the variant *hunaalika* is also used.

فهناك أولويات أهم.

fa-hunaaka 'awwalawiyyaat-un 'ahamm-u.

There [are] more important priorities.

هناك مثلا القصور.

hunaalika mathal-an-i l-quSuur-u.

There [are], for example, castles.

فهناك روايات عدة عما حدث للملكة.

fa-hunaaka riwaayaat-un 'iddat-un 'ammaa Hadath-a li-l-malikat-i.

There [are] several stories about what happened to the queen.

Relative pronouns and relative clauses

Relative pronouns relate an element in a subordinate relative clause (in Arabic, *al-Sila* الصلة) to a noun or noun phrase in the main clause of a sentence. The Arabic relative pronoun (*al-ism al-mawSuul* الاسم الموصول) may be definite or indefinite. MSA uses nine forms of definite relative pronoun. Only the dual form of the definite relative pronoun shows difference in case. All, however, are marked for number and gender.

Relative clauses in Arabic are either definite or indefinite; definite clauses are introduced by a relative pronoun; indefinite relative clauses do not include a relative pronoun.

1 Definite relative pronouns

	Masculine	Feminine
Singular	الَّذِي <i>alladhii</i>	الَّتِي <i>allatii</i>
Dual Nominative	اللَّذَانِ <i>alladhaani</i>	اللَّتَانِ <i>allataani</i>
Genitive/Accusative	اللَّذَيْنِ <i>alladhayni</i>	اللَّتَيْنِ <i>allatayni</i>
Plural	الَّذِينَ <i>alladhiina</i>	اللَّوَاتِي ~ اللَّاتِي <i>allaatii ~ allawaatii</i>

As can be seen from the above paradigm the definite relative pronouns have a component that resembles the definite article, */al-/* الـ. They refer only to definite nouns and noun phrases. The initial */al-/* of the relative pronoun starts with *hamzat al-waSl*.

2 Definite relative clauses

A relative clause referring back to a definite antecedent uses the definite relative pronouns. The relative pronoun agrees with its antecedent in number and gender.

2.1 Singular relative pronoun

هي التي أرسلت الدكتورة.

hiya llatii 'arsal-at-i l-duktuur-a.

She is **the one who** sent the doctor.

وهو الذي وضع المسمار الأخير.

wa-huwa lladhii waDa^c-a l-mismaar-a l-'axiir-a.

And he is **the one who** put [in] the last nail.

المركز الجديد الذي أقيم في المدينة

al-markaz-u l-jadiid-u lladhii 'uqiim-a fii l-madiinat-i

the new center **which** has been established in the city

2.2 Dual relative pronoun

In the dual, the relative pronoun agrees not only in gender and number with its antecedent, but also in case.

البرجان اللذان لا يزالان قائمين

al-burj-aani lladhaani laa ya-zaal-aani qaa'im-ayni

the two towers **which** remain standing

للزوجين اللذين ينتظران حدثاً سعيداً

li-l-zawj-ayni lladh-ayni ya-ntaZir-aani Hadath-an sa^ciid-an

for the couple **who** are awaiting a happy event

في الجلستين اللتين انعقدتا أمس

fii l-jalsat-ayni llatayni n^caqad-ataa 'ams-i

in the two sessions **that** were held yesterday

2.3 Plural relative pronoun

The plural relative pronoun is used only when referring to human beings.

السياح الذين يصلون كل يوم

al-siyyaaH-u lladhiina ya-Sil-uuna kull-a yawm-in

the tourists **who** arrive every day

النسوة اللواتي أرغمن على الإخلاء بالقوة

al-niswat-u llawaatii 'urghim-na ^calaa l-'ixlaa³-i bi l-quwwat-i

the women **who** were compelled to evacuate by force

3 Indefinite relative clauses

A relative clause may refer to an indefinite noun or noun phrase in the main clause, in which case the **relative pronoun is omitted**.

The indefinite relative clause follows the main clause without any relative pronoun linking them. They are like two independent sentences implicitly linked because the second refers back to the first.

في زيارة لدمشق تستغرق أسبوعاً

fii ziyaarat-in li-dimashq-a ta-staghriq-u ʿusbuuʿ-an

on a visit to Damascus [which] lasts a week

عثرت على هيكل عظمي فقد رأسه.

ʿathar-at ʿalaa haykal-in ʿaZmiyy-in faqad-a raʿs-a-hu.

She came upon a skeleton [which] had lost its head.

وأخيراً يظهر كرجل يمتلك الشجاعة.

wa-ʿaxiir-an ya-Zhur-u ka-rajul-in ya-mtalik-u l-shujaaʿ-at-a.

Finally, he appears as a man [who] possesses courage.

عن مصدر فلسطيني رفض الكشف عن اسمه

ʿan maSdar-in filisTiiniyy-in rafaD-a l-kashf-a ʿan-i sm-i-hi

from a Palestinian source [who] refused to disclose his name

4 Resumptive pronouns in relative clauses

When a relative clause in Arabic refers back to a noun or noun phrase in the main clause which is the object of a verb or a preposition (e.g., “the book that we read,” “the house that I lived in”), a pronoun must be inserted in the relative clause to serve as the object of the verb or preposition, referring back to the object noun in the main phrase [“the book that we read (it),” *al-kitaab-u lladhii qaraʿ-naa-hu* “the school I studied at (it)” *al-madrasat-u llatii daras-tu fii-haa* (المدرسة التي درست فيها)].

This substitute pronoun is called in Arabic the *ʿaaʿid* عائِد or *raaji* راجِع ‘returner’ and in English it is referred to as a **resumptive pronoun**. It occurs in definite and indefinite relative clauses that contain transitive verbs or prepositions referring back to an object in the main clause.

4.1 Resumptive pronoun in definite relative clauses

المكان الذي تقصده هنا.

al-makaan-u lladhii ta-qSid-u-hu hunaa.

The place **which** you seek (it) is here.

هذا بيت الرجل الذي نبحث عنه.

haadhaa bayt-u l-rajul-i lladhii na-bHath-u ʿan-hu.

This is the house of the man **whom** we are searching for (**him**).

العون الذي قدمته لأفغانستان

al-ʿawn-u lladhii qaddam-at-hu li-ʾafghaanistaan-a

the aid **which** it has offered (**it**) to Afghanistan

حافظوا على المخطوطات التي أقرعوها.

HaafaZ-uu ʿalaa l-maxTuuT-aat-i llatii ʾaqnaʿ-uu-haa.

They kept the manuscripts **which** they had authenticated (**them**).

في معظم الدوائر التي كانت النتائج فيها نهائية

fii muʿZam-i l-dawaaʾir-i llatii kaan-at-i l-nataaʾij-u fii-haa nihaaʾiyyat-an

in most of the precincts **in which** the results were final

في المكان الذي سقط فيه الصاروخ

fii l-makaan-i lladhii saqaT-a fii-hi l-Saaruux-u

at the place **where** the rocket fell (**into it**)

4.2 Resumptive pronoun in indefinite relative clauses

Indefinite relative clauses do not include relative pronouns, but they must include a resumptive pronoun if the clause refers back to a noun or noun phrase that is the object of a preposition or a verb.

وقال في مؤتمر صحفي عقده أمس

wa-qaal-a fii muʾtamar-in SiHaafiyy-in ʿaqad-a-hu ʾams-i.

he said in a press conference [which] he held (**it**) yesterday

في اجتماع مغلق عقده زعيما الحزبين . . .

fii jtimaʿ-in mughlaq-in ʿaqad-a-hu zaʿiim-aa l-Hizb-ayni

in a closed meeting [which] the two leaders of the parties held (**it**)

5 Indefinite or non-specific relative pronouns: *maa* ما and *man* مَنْ

These pronouns refer to non-specified entities.

whoever; he/she who; one who

من

man

whatever; what; that which

ماذا ~ ما

maa ~ maadhaa

5.1 Use of *man* as indefinite pronoun

The pronoun *man* is used to refer to unspecified individuals. It may denote one person or a group but is usually treated grammatically as masculine singular.

يبيعها إلى من يحتاجها.

ya-bii^c-u-haa ^ʔilaa **man** ya-Htaa^j-u-haa.

He sells it to **whomever** needs it.

هناك من يقول . . .

hunaaka **man** ya-quul-u . . .

there are **those** that say . . .

كان أول من رأى القمر.

kaan-a ^ʔawwal-a **man** ra^ʔaa l-qamar-a.

He was the first [person] **who** saw the moon.

5.2 Use of *maa*: 'whatever; that which'

The relative pronoun *maa* functions in a wide variety of contexts.¹ Note that this use of *maa* is distinct from its use as an interrogative or negative particle.

ما بين النهرين

maa bayn-a l-nahr-ayni

Mesopotamia ('**that which** is between two rivers')

في ما يتعلق بالزراعة

fii **maa** ya-ta^callaq-u bi-l-ziraa^cat-i

in **whatever** relates to agriculture

ما لا نهاية

maa laa nihaayat-a

infinity ('**that which** has no end')

وقال ما يلي . . .

wa-qaal-a **maa** ya-lii . . .

(And) he said the following . . .

('that which follows')

فلم يحدث ما حدث في الشام.

fa-lam ya-Hdath **maa** Hadath-a fii l-shaam-i.

What happened in Syria has not happened [here].

ما قيل وما سيقال عنه.

maa qiil-a wa-**maa** sa-yu-qaal-u ^can-hu.

What has been said and **what** will be said about it.

5.3 *maa* and *man* + resumptive pronoun

The indefinite pronouns *maa* and *man*, if they refer to the object of a verb or a preposition, are usually followed by a resumptive pronoun in the relative clause.²

هذا ما أقصده بالضبط.

haadhaa **maa** ^ʔaqsid-u-**hu** bi-l-DabT-i.

This is exactly **what** I mean (it).

شكره على ما قدمه.

shakar-a-hu ^calaa **maa** qaddam-a-**hu**.

He thanked him for **what** he offered (it).

¹ Wehr lists nine different uses of *maa* (1979, 1042) and Abboud et al. (1997, 47–49) list examples of all nine uses: negative *maa*, interrogative *maa*, relative *maa*, nominalizing *maa*, durative *maa*, exclamatory *maa*, indefinite *maa*, conditional *maa*, and redundant *maa*.

² Technically, a resumptive pronoun is not necessary after an indefinite pronoun that refers to an object of a verb, but it was used consistently in the data gathered for this book. See Abboud and McCarus 1983, part 1:588; MECAS 1965, 97.

تحصل على ما تحتاجه.

ta-HSul-u ʿalaa *maa* ta-Htaaj-u-hu.

They get **what** they need (it).

فأوضحت ما تقصده.

fa-ʾawDaH-at *maa* ta-qSid-u-hu.

So she explained **what** she meant (it).

5.4 *maadhaa* as relative pronoun

Sometimes the particle *maadhaa* 'what' is used instead of *maa*, especially when the use of *maa* (which also functions as a negative particle) may be confusing:

يعرف ماذا يريد حقاً.

ya-ʿrif-u *maadhaa* yu-riid-u Haqq-an.

He really knows **what** he wants.

5.5 Use of *maa* for approximation

Used with numbers, amounts, and times, *maa* serves as a pronoun that can link a prepositional or verbal phrase to a previous statement by indicating approximation:

يستغرق ما بين شهرين وثلاثة.

ya-staghriq-u *maa* bayn-a shahr-ayni wa-thalaathat-in.

It will last (**what is approximately**) between two and three months.

قد يصل إلى ما بين ثلاثمئة وأربعمئة ألف شخص.

qad ya-Sil-u ʾilaa *maa* bayn-a thalaath-i-miʾat-i wa-ʾarbaʿ-i-miʾat-i ʾalf-i shaxS-in.

It might reach (**what is approximately**) between 300 and 400 thousand people.

يستطيع الجمل أن يشرب ما حجمه من الماء.

ya-staTiiʿ-u l-jamal-u ʾan ya-shrab-a *maa* Hajam-a-hu min-a l-maaʾ-i.

The camel can drink his weight (**what approximately his weight is**) **in water**.

يتوجب الانتظار إلى ما بعد يوم السبت.

ya-tawajjab-u l-intiZaar-u ʾilaa *maa* baʿd-a yawm-i l-sabt-i.

It is necessary to wait until (**approximately what is**) after Saturday.

5.6 *maa* 'a certain; some, one'

The relative pronoun *maa* is also used following a noun to emphasize its indefiniteness or non-particularity, as in the following expressions:

غيرت موقفها إلى حد ما.

ghayyar-at mawqif-a-haa ʾilaa Hadd-in *maa*.

She changed her position to a **certain extent**.

سيرجع يوماً ما.

sa-ya-rjiʿ-u yawm-an *maa*.

He will come back **one day**.

لماذا تحب فنانا ما؟

li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u fannaan-an *maa*?

Why do you like a **certain artist**?

5.7 *mimmaa* مِمَّا

The contracted phrase *mimmaa* (*min* + *maa*) may be used instead of the simple *maa* when referring to a preceding situation or condition:

مِمَّا أَمَّنَ لَهُ اتِّصَالًا دَائِمًا

mimmaa ʔamman-a la-hu ttiSaal-an daaʔ im-an

which guaranteed him a permanent connection

مِمَّا يُوَدِّي إِلَى إعْطَاءِ الْمَجْلَةِ طَابَعًا أَدَبِيًّا

mimmaa yu-ʔaddii ʔ ilaa ʔiʔTaaʔ-i l-majallat-i Taabiʕ-an ʔadabiyy-an

which leads to giving the journal a literary character

مِمَّا يَعْنِي أَنَّ كَلْفَةَ الْمَشْرُوعِ

mimmaa ya-ʕnii ʔanna kalfat-a l-mashruuʕ-i

which means that the cost of the project

5.8 *bi-maa fii* بِمَا فِي + pronoun 'including'

This common idiomatic expression includes the indefinite pronoun *maa*:

يَجْرِي اتِّصَالَاتٌ مَعَ جَمِيعِ الْأَطْرَافِ بِمَا فِيهَا حُكُومَةُ إِسْرَائِيلَ.

yu-jrii ttiSaalaat-in maʕ-a jamiiʕ-i l-ʔaTraaf-i bi-maa fii-haa Hukuumat-i ʔisraaʔiil-a.

He is in communication ('conducting contacts') with all the parties **including** the government of Israel.

Numerals and numeral phrases

The Arabic numeral system has been described as “somewhat complicated” (Cowan 1964, 182), “assez complexe (‘rather complex’)” (Kouloughli 1994, 121), “one of the trickiest features of written Arabic” (Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 301), as having “a special difficulty” (Cantarino 1975, II:361), and it has been said that the numerals “do not readily lend themselves to inductive analysis” (Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 148). These observations provide an indication of the complexity of a system which is important to understand but also challenging in the diversity of its categories and rules.

Provided here is an outline of the general structure of the morphology and syntax of MSA numerals, with examples taken from various contemporary contexts.¹ The rules and examples are presented in numerical order, cardinal numerals first and then ordinal numerals.²

1 Cardinal numerals (*al-ʿaʿdaad* الأعداد)

The Arabic numerals “zero” through “ten” are listed as follows. To some extent there is resemblance with what are termed “Arabic” numbers in English, but the system is adapted from the Hindi numeral system and has significant differences.

zero	0	<i>Sifr</i> ³	٠	صفر
one	1	<i>waaHid</i>	١	واحد
two	2	<i>ithnaan</i>	٢	اثنان
three	3	<i>thalaatha</i>	٣	ثلاثة
four	4	<i>ʿarbaʿa</i>	٤	أربعة
five	5	<i>xamsa</i>	٥	خمسة

¹ I am grateful to my colleague, Dr. Muhsin Esseesy, for reading, correcting, and commenting on this chapter. See also Esseesy 2000.

² For further reading on the morphology and syntax of Arabic numbers, see Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 1:410–21; Cantarino 1975, II:361–98; Cowan 1964, 182–90; Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 301–26; Wright 1967, II:234–49.

³ Cognate with English ‘cipher.’

six	6	sitta	٦	ستة
seven	7	sab'a	٧	سبعة
eight	8	thamaaniya	٨	ثمانية
nine	9	tis'a	٩	تسعة
ten	10	'ashra	١٠	عشرة

The numerals “one” and “two” have special features. “One” has two forms: an adjectival (*waaHid*) and a noun (or pronoun) form (*'aHad*), used in different ways. The numeral “two” is special because of the independent and extensive nature of the dual category in Arabic morphology. The numerals three to ten, on the other hand, are all nouns.

1.1 The numeral “one”

1.1.1 *waaHid* واحد and *waaHida* واحدة

The numeral ‘one’ *waaHid* has the morphological pattern of an active participle of Form I (*faa'il*). It behaves syntactically as an adjective, following the counted noun, and agreeing with it in case and gender.

في وقت واحد

fii waqt-in waaHid-in
at one time

بهدفين مقابل هدف واحد

bi-hadaf-ayni muqaabil-a hadaf-in waaHid-in
with two goals as opposed to one goal

هل لهذا البلد أكثر من اسم واحد؟

hal li-haadhaa l-balad-i 'akthar-u min-i sm-in waaHid-in?

Does this country have more than one name?

قبل أن يخفف العقوبة إلى سنة واحدة فقط

qabl-a 'an yu-xaffifa l-'uquubat-a 'ilaa sanat-in waaHidat-in faqaT

before he lightened the penalty to one year only

1.1.2 ‘One of’: *'aHad* أحد and *'iHdaa* إحدى

This form of “one” is usually used when expressing the notion “one of.”⁴ It is a noun that forms the first term of an *'iDaafa* or genitive construct, with the

⁴ However, *waaHid min* is also occasionally found for the expression of “one of”:

المنطقة كلها واحدة من أقل مناطق الجزائر سكاناً.

al-minTaqat-u kull-u-haa waaHidat-un min 'aqall-i manaaTiq-i l-jazaa'ir-i sukkaan-an.

The entire region is one of the lowest-populated in Algeria.

إلى واحد من أهم الفنون المعاصرة

'ilaa waaHid-in min 'ahamm-i l-funuun-i l-mu'aaSirat-i

to one of the most important contemporary arts

following noun in the genitive dual or plural, or pronoun, which is dual or plural. The masculine form, ^oaHad, is triptote; the feminine form, ^oiHdaa, is invariable.

1.1.2.1 ^oaHad أحد:

في أحد مستشفيات جدة	أحد النواب المستقلين
fii ^o aHad-i mustashfayaat-i jiddat-a	^o aHad-u l-nuwwaab-i l-mustaqill-iina
in one of the hospitals of Jidda	one of the independent deputies

أحدهم أصيب.	أحد مستشاري الرئيس
^o aHad-u-hum ^o uSiib-a.	^o aHad-u mustashaar-ii l-ra ^o iis-i
One of them was hit.	one of the president's counselors

قدم أحد أعضاء المؤتمر اقتراحاً.
qaddam-a ^oaHad-u ^oa^oDaa^o-i l-mu^otamar-i qtiraaH-an.
One of the members of the conference offered a proposal.

1.1.2.2 ^oiHdaa إحدى: The feminine numeral ^oiHdaa is invariable in case:

إحدى مدن المنطقة	في إحدى هذه المحاولات
^o iHdaa mudun-i l-minTaaqat-i	fii ^o iHdaa haadhihi l-muHaawalaat-i
one of the cities of the region	in one of these attempts

إحدى مهام هذه اللجنة
^oiHdaa mahaamm-i haadhihi l-lajnat-i
one of the tasks of this committee

1.1.2.3 'NO ONE, NOBODY; NEITHER ONE': Used with a negative verb, ^oaHad is equivalent to 'no one' or 'nobody':

قالت إنَّ أحداً لا يستطيع أن يوقفهم.
qaal-at ^oinna ^oaHad-an laa ya-staTii^o-u ^oan yu-waqqif-a-hum.
She said that no one could stop them.

لم يكن أحد من الأسرة المالكة في القصر.
lam ya-kun ^oaHad-un min-a l-^ousrat-i l-maalikat-i fii l-qaSr-i.
No one from the royal family was in the castle.

ليس في استطاعة أحدهما أن يعيش من دون الآخر.
lays-a fii stiTaa^o-at-i ^oaHad-i-naa ^oan ya-^oiish-a min duun-i l-^oaaxar-i.
Neither one of us can live without the other.

1.2 The numeral ‘two’ *ithnaan* اثنان and *ithnataan* اثنتان

The numeral “two” has both feminine and masculine forms and it also inflects for case.

	Masc.	Fem.
Nominative	اثنان <i>ithnaani</i>	اثنتان <i>ithnataani</i>
Genitive	اثنين <i>ithnayni</i>	اثنتين <i>ithnatayni</i>
Accusative	اثنين <i>ithnayni</i>	اثنتين <i>ithnatayni</i>

The genitive and accusative forms of inflection are identical, putting the numeral “two” into the two-way inflection category, just like the dual suffix on nouns and adjectives. Note that the initial vowel on *ithnaan* is a *hamzat al-waSl*, not a strong *hamza* (*hamzat al-qaTʕ*).

1.2.1 The dual (*al-muthannaa* المثنى)

The numeral “two” is rarely used for counting purposes because of the existence of the dual category in the Arabic grammatical system. Two of anything is a separate inflectional class and receives a separate inflectional suffix: *-aani* (nominative) or *-ayni* (genitive/accusative). Note that dual agreement (pronouns, verbs, adjectives) follows a dual noun. See Chapter 7, sections 3.1 and 5.4.2.1., subsection (1) for further discussion of dual inflection.

1.2.1.1 MASCULINE DUAL: The masculine dual is used to refer to masculine nouns or a mix of feminine and masculine.

دخل الملكان.
daxal-a l-malik-aani.

The **two rulers** entered.
(Here, referring to a king and queen.)

بين البلدين
bayn-a l-balad-ayni
between the **two countries**

وقد وجد طابقان بُنِيَ من الحجارة.
wa-qad wujud-a Taabaq-aani buniy-aa
min-a l-Hijaarat-i.
Two **floors** were found **built** of stone.

تحمل بتوأمين.
ta-Hmil-u bi-tawʕam-ayni.
She is pregnant with **twins**.

1.2.1.2 FEMININE DUAL

أما المدينتان الأخرى
ʿammaa l-madiinat-aani l-ʿuxray-aani
 as for the other two cities

الدولتان العظميان
al-dawlat-aani l-ʿuZmay-aani
 the two super powers

خلال السنتين الماضيتين
xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maaDiyat-ayni
 during the past two years

1.2.1.3 DUAL OF DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS: Demonstrative pronouns also have dual forms. When modifying dual nouns, they agree in duality, case, and gender:

من هذين الصحافيين
min haadh-ayni l-SiHaafiyy-ayni
 from these two journalists

أعضاء هاتين اللجنتين
ʿaʿDaaʿ-u haat-ayni l-lajnat-ayni
 the members of these two committees

1.2.1.4 nuun-DELETION: When a dual noun is the first term of an annexation structure, or if it has a pronoun suffix, the *nuun* (and its short vowel *kasra*) of the dual suffix is deleted:

عنوانا الكتابين
ʿunwaan-aa l-kitaab-ayni
 the [two] titles of the two books

في كتفي الثور
fii kitf-ay-i l-thawr-i
 in the two shoulders of the bull

في وادي نهري دجلة والفرات
fii waadii nahr-ay dijlat-a wa-l-furaat-i
 in the valley of the two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates

1.2.1.5 DUAL FOR EMPHASIS AND DISAMBIGUATION: Occasionally the number “two” is used explicitly in order to emphasize, distinguish two among others, or disambiguate.

فأثنتان منها تُعتبران معقلاً للمعارضة.
fa-thnataani min-haa tu-ʿtabar-aani maʿqil-an li-l-muʿaaraDat-i.
 (For) two of them [cities] are considered a stronghold for the opposition.

تضم ممثلين اثنين عن كل جانب.
ta-Dumm-u mumaththil-ayni thnayni ʿan kull-i jaanib-in.
 It includes two representatives from each side.*

*Here, the word *thnayn* is added to clarify the status of the word *mumaththil-ayni* ممثلين because in unvoweled Arabic script it looks identical to the plural, *mumaththil-iina* ممثلين.

1.2.1.6 ‘BOTH’ *kilaa* AND *kiltaa* The words *kilaa* (m.) and *kiltaa* (f.) are quantifiers used to express the concept of “both.” These words are related to the noun *kull* ‘all,’ and are not part of the numeral system, but are considered to have numerative meaning. They are specifically dual and followed either by a noun in the dual or by a dual pronoun suffix.

When followed by a noun they do not inflect for case; when followed by a pronoun, they do inflect for case.

in both cases	<i>fii kiltaa l-Haalat-ayni</i>	في كلتا الحالتين
with both his (two) hands	<i>bi-kiltaa yad-ay-hi</i>	بكلتا يديه
both of them (m.)	<i>kilaa-humaa</i>	كلاهما
with both of them	<i>bi-kil-ay-himaa</i>	بكليهما

For further discussion of *kilaa* and *kiltaa*, see Chapter 9, section 1.3.

1.3 Numerals three to ten

Arabic numerals three to ten have two distinctive characteristics: first, they are followed by a plural noun in the genitive case, and second, they show **gender polarity**, or reverse gender agreement with the counted noun. That is, if the singular noun is masculine, the numeral will have the feminine marker *taa'* *marbuuTa*, and if the singular noun is feminine, the numeral will be in the masculine form.

The numerals three to ten are as follows:

Used for counting f. nouns		Used for counting m. nouns	
<i>thalaath</i>	ثَلَاثَ	<i>thalaatha</i>	ثَلَاثَةٌ
<i>'arba'</i>	أَرْبَعَ	<i>arba'a</i>	أَرْبَعَةٌ
<i>xams</i>	خَمْسَ	<i>xamsa</i>	خَمْسَةٌ
<i>sitt</i>	سِتَ	<i>sitta</i>	سِتَّةٌ
<i>sab'</i>	سَبْعَ	<i>sab'a</i>	سَبْعَةٌ
<i>thamaanin</i> ⁵	ثَمَانِ	<i>thamaaniya</i>	ثَمَانِيَةٌ
<i>tis'</i>	تِسْعَ	<i>tis'a</i>	تِسْعَةٌ
<i>'ashr</i>	عَشَرَ	<i>'ashara</i>	عَشْرَةٌ

⁵ The numeral ‘eight’ *thamaanin*, is defective in the masculine gender (the feminine form, ending in *taa'* *marbuuTa*, is triptote, or regular in declension). As an indefinite defective noun it declines as follows: nominative and genitive have identical form: *thamaan-in*; accusative has the form *thamaaniyan*; as a definite noun, the nominative and genitive are also identical: *thamaanii*, and the accusative definite form is *thamaaniya*. See the declension for defective nouns in Chapter 7, section 5.4.3

In recitation form, in counting without a counted noun, or in referring to a specific numeral alone, the form with *taa'* *marbuuTa* is usually used. For example:

رقم ستة هو رقم سحري.	واحد، إثنان، ثلاثة!
<i>raqm-u sittat-in huwa raqm-un siHriyy-un.</i>	<i>waaHid-un, ithnaani, thalaathat-un!</i>
The number six is a magic number.	One, two three!

1.3.1 Three to ten counted nouns

Counted noun phrases from three to ten have two forms, definite (“the five houses”) and indefinite (“five houses”). If an adjective follows the counted noun (“the five large houses; five large houses”), it agrees with the noun in case, gender, and definiteness. For nonhuman plural nouns, the adjective is feminine singular and for human nouns, the adjective is plural.

1.3.1.1 INDEFINITE COUNTED NOUN: With an indefinite counted item, the numeral shows reverse gender agreement and precedes the counted noun. The case marker on the numeral varies according to its role in the sentence and it is considered definite because it is in an *’iDaafa* relationship with the noun, so the case ending on the numeral is in definite form (i.e., it does not take nunation). The counted noun itself is plural, indefinite, and in the genitive case.

(1) Feminine noun = masculine numeral form

ثلاث مخطوطات
thalaath-u maxTuuTaata-in (singular *maxTuuTa* مخطوطة)
three manuscripts

ثلاث قصائد
thalaath-u qaSaa’id-a (singular *qaSiida* قصيدة)
three odes

نقرأ ثلاث مقابلات.
na-qra’-u thalaath-a muqaabalaat-in. (singular *muqaabala* مقابلة)
We are reading **three** interviews.

ثلاث آبار عميقة
thalaath-u ’aabaar-in ’amiiqat-in (singular *bi’r* بئر)⁶
three deep wells

⁶ The singular of “well” (*bi’r*) looks masculine but is actually cryptofeminine.

خمس مرات في اليوم

xams-a marraat-in fii l-yawm-i (singular *marra* مرة)

five times a day

ضمن ست فرق عمل

Dimn-a sitt-i firaq-i ʿamal-in (singular *firqa* فرقة)

within six working groups

لمدة ثماني ساعات

li-muddat-i thamaanii saaʿaat-in (singular *saaʿa* ساعة)

for a period of eight hours

سرقوا تسع سيارات.

saraq-uu tisʿ-a sayyaaraat-in. (singular *sayyaara* سيارة)

They stole nine cars.

(2) Masculine noun = feminine numeral form

أربعة خناجر

ʿarbaʿat-u xanaajir-a (singular *xanjar* خنجر)

four daggers

خمسة دراهم

xamsat-u daraahim-a (singular *dirham* درهم)

five dirhams

بسرعة ستة كيلومترات في الثانية

bi-surʿat-i sittat-i kiiluumitraat-in fii l-thaaniyat-i (singular *kiilumitr* كيلومتر)

at the rate of six kilometers per second

وأضافت أن سبعة أشخاص أُعتقلوا.

wa-ʿaDaaf-at ʿanna sabʿat-a ʿashxaaS-in uʿtuqil-uu. (singular *shaxS* شخص)

It added that seven persons were detained.

إلى مسافة عشرة أمتار

ʿilaa masaafat-i ʿasharat-i ʿamtaar-in (singular *mitr* متر)

to a distance of ten meters

(3) Indefinite counted noun plus adjective:

لنا ثلاثة احتياجات أساسية.

la-naa thalaathat-u Htiyaajaat-in ʿasaasiyyat-in. (singular *iHtiyaaaj* احتياج)

We have three basic needs.

لثلاثة مواسم متتالية

li-thalaathat-i mawaasim-a mutataaliyat-in (singular *mawsim* موسم)
for three successive seasons

يستقبل أربعة سفراء جدد.

ya-staqbil-u ʿarbaʿat-a sufaraaʿ-a judud-in. (singular *safiir* سفير)
He welcomes four new ambassadors.

خمسة مؤتمرات دولية

xamsat-u muʿtamaraat-in duwaliyyat-in (singular *muʿtamar* مؤتمر)
five international conferences

- (4) **Indefinite with definite meaning:** This can occur when a numeral is used with a superlative expression, where the superlative adjective is followed by an indefinite plural noun.⁷

في أهم أربع مدن

fii ʾahamm-i ʿarbaʿ-i mudun-in
in the most important four cities

- (5) **Indefinite noun with following numeral:** Rarely, an indefinite counted noun will precede the numeral. The numeral still shows reverse gender, but in this position it is in apposition with the noun and takes the same case as the noun:

من خلال جلسات ثلاث

min xilaal-i jalasaat-in thalaath-in (singular *jalsa* جلسة)
through three sessions

خلال عقود ثلاثة

xilaal-a ʿuquud-in thalaathat-in (singular *ʿaqd* عقد)
during three decades

- (6) **Indefinite numeral followed by *min* 'of':** When indicating a specific number of items among a larger number, an indefinite form of the numeral may be used followed by *min* 'of' and a definite noun or noun phrase:

يضم أربعة من وزراء النفط.

ya-Dumm-u ʿarbaʿat-an min wuzaraaʿ-i l-nift-i.
It includes four of the petroleum ministers.

⁷ For further discussion of this point, see Chapter 10, section 4.2.4.

1.3.1.2 DEFINITE COUNTED NOUN: In the definite form, the numeral is in apposition with the noun. It follows the noun, it agrees with the noun in case, it has the definite article, and it shows reverse gender agreement.

- (1) **Masculine noun:** With a noun that is masculine in the singular, a feminine numeral form is used:

أركان الإسلام الخمسة

ʾarkaan-u l-ʾislaam-i l-xamsat-u (singular rukn ركن)

the five pillars of Islam

طوال العقود الثلاثة الأخيرة

Tiwaal-a l-ʿuquud-i l-thalaathat-i l-ʾaxiirat-i (singular ʿaqd عقد)

during the last three decades

وزراء النفط الستة

wuzaraaʾ-u l-nift-i l-sittat-u (singular waziir وزير)

the six oil ministers

- (2) **Feminine noun:** With a noun that is feminine in the singular, the masculine form of the numeral is used:

الجهات الأربع الأصلية

al-jihaat-u l-ʾarbaʿ-u l-ʾašliyyat-u (singular jiha جهة)

the four cardinal directions

دقات القلب الخمس

daqqaat-u l-qalb-i l-xams-u (singular daqqa دقة).

the five heartbeats

في القارات الخمس

fii l-qaarraat-i l-xams-i (singular qaarra قارة)

on the five continents

بين ممثلي هذه الصحف السبع

bayn-a mumaththil-i haadhihi l-SuHuf-i l-sabʿ-i (singular SaHiifa صحيفة)

among the representatives of these seven newspapers

- (3) **Definite counted noun with following adjective:** When a definite counted noun is modified by an adjective, the adjective follows the numeral and agrees with the noun in gender, case, and definiteness. For nonhuman nouns, the plural form of the adjective is feminine singular; for human nouns, the adjective is plural in form.

بين ألوان الطيف السبعة المعروفة

bayn-a ʾalwaan-i l-Tayf-i l-sabʿat-i l-maʿruufat-i (singular lawn لون)

among the seven known colors of the spectrum

أوضح أن الفائزين الخمسة الأوائل في المسابقة سوف يمثلون بلادهم.
^ʔawDaH-a ^ʔanna l-faa^ʔiz-iina l-xamsat-a l-^ʔawaa^ʔil-a fii l-musaabaqat-i sawfa
 yu-maththil-uuna bilaad-a-hum. (singular faa^ʔiz فائز)

He declared that **the first five winners** in the match would represent their country.

1.3.2 Plural numerals

The numerals taken in groups, such as “tens” are made plural with the sound feminine plural marker -aat:

حطموا عشرات الأرقام القياسية.
 HaTam-uu ^ʔasharaat-i l-^ʔarqaam-i l-qiyaasiyyat-i.
 They broke tens of records.

1.4 Numerals eleven and twelve

The numerals eleven and twelve start the teens number series.⁸ In this set of numerals, the numeral names are compounds, that is, they are formed of two parts, the first part referring to the first digit and the second part always some form of the word “ten” (^ʔashar or ^ʔashra).

Eleven: The numeral eleven is **invariable in case**, being **accusative at all times**. The first component of the compound number is the word ^ʔaHad (m.) أحد or ^ʔiHdaa (f.) إحدى, rather than the word waaHid. Both parts of the compound numeral show the same gender.

Twelve: The numeral twelve shows **two case inflections, nominative and genitive-accusative**, along the lines of the numeral “two” and the dual. Both parts of the compound numeral show the same gender.

	Masculine	Feminine
eleven	أحد عشر ^ʔ aHad-a ^ʔ ashar-a	إحدى عشرة ^ʔ iHdaa ^ʔ ashrat-a
twelve nominative	اثنا عشر ithn-aa ^ʔ ashar-a	اثنتا عشرة ^ʔ ithnat-aa ^ʔ ashrat-a
twelve genitive-accusative	اثني عشر ithn-ay ^ʔ ashar-a	اثنتي عشرة ithnat-ay ^ʔ ashrat-a

⁸ In contemporary newspaper Arabic, numerals over ten tend to be in figures rather than spelled out in words. In this chapter the numbers are converted into spelled-out numerals in order to illustrate how they are pronounced and how the numeral system works.

When used in a counted noun phrase, both components of the compound numerals eleven and twelve agree with the counted noun in gender. They do not show gender polarity. They are followed by a noun in the accusative singular. This accusative is a form of *tamyiz*, or “accusative of specification.”⁹

1.4.1 Indefinite counted nouns

1.4.1.1 FEMININE COUNTED NOUN = FEMININE ELEVEN OR TWELVE:

ثمنها إحدى عشرة ليرة.
thaman-u-haa 'iHdaa 'ashrat-a liirat-an.
 Its price is eleven liras/pounds.

بُنيت قبل إحدى عشرة سنة.
buniy-at qabl-a 'iHdaa 'ashrat-a sanat-an.
 It was built eleven years ago.

ثمنها اثنتا عشرة ليرة.
thaman-u-haa thnat-aa 'ashrat-a liirat-an.
 Its price is twelve liras/pounds.

بُنيت قبل اثنتي عشرة سنة.
buniy-at qabl-a thnat-ay 'ashrat-a sanat-an.
 It was built twelve years ago.

1.4.1.2 MASCULINE NOUN = MASCULINE ELEVEN OR TWELVE:

ثمنها أحد عشر درهماً.
thaman-u-haa 'aHad-a 'ashar-a dirham-an.
 Its price is eleven dirhams.

بُنيت قبل أحد عشر عاماً.
buniy-at qabl-a 'aHad-a 'ashar-a 'aam-an.
 It was built eleven years ago.

ثمنها اثنا عشر درهماً.
thaman-u-haa thn-aa 'ashar-a dirham-an.
 Its price is twelve dirhams.

بُنيت قبل اثني عشر عاماً.
buniy-at qabl-a thn-ay 'ashar-a 'aam-an.
 It was built twelve years ago.

1.4.2 Definite counted nouns with eleven and twelve

When the counted noun is definite, the numeral eleven or twelve follows the plural noun and the definite article is affixed to the first part of the numeral only. The case marker of the noun varies depending on the role of the noun in the sentence; the case marker on eleven is always accusative; the case marker on the first part of the numeral twelve varies according to the case of the noun it modifies.

⁹ For further discussion of the *tamyiz* structure see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.7, and Chapter 11, section 6.

1.4.2.1 MASCULINE DEFINITE PLURAL NOUN:

حضر السفراء الأحد عشر.

HaDar-a l-sufaraa'-u l-'aHad-a 'ashar-a.

The eleven ambassadors came.

حضر السفراء الاثنا عشر.

HaDar-a l-sufaraa'-u l-thn-aa 'ashr-a.

The twelve ambassadors came.

يستقبل السفراء الأحد عشر.

*ya-staqbil-u l-sufaraa'-a l-'aHad-a
'ashar-a.*

He is welcoming the eleven
ambassadors.

يستقبل السفراء الاثني عشر.

*ya-staqbil-u l-sufaraa'-a
l-thnay'ashar-a.*

He is welcoming the twelve
ambassadors.

1.4.2.2 FEMININE DEFINITE NOUN:

حضرت الأستاذات الإحدى عشرة.

HaDar-at-i l-'ustaadhaat-u l-'iHdaa 'ashrat-a.

The eleven professors (f.) came.

حضرت الأستاذات الاثنتا عشرة.

HaDar-at-i l-'ustaadhaat-u l-ithnat-aa 'asharat-a.

The twelve professors (f.) came.

يستقبل الأستاذات الإحدى عشرة.

ya-staqbil-u l-'ustaadhaat-i l-iHdaa 'ashrat-a.

He is welcoming the eleven professors (f.).

يستقبل الأستاذات الاثنتي عشرة.

ya-staqbil-u l-'ustaadhaat-i l-ithnat-ay 'ashrat-a.

He is welcoming the twelve professors (f.).

1.5 Numbers thirteen to nineteen

The group of “teens” numerals are similar to the numeral eleven in that they are invariably in the accusative case and are followed by a singular accusative noun. They are unlike eleven and twelve in that the first part of the compound number shows gender polarity with the counted noun, while the second part of the compound number shows direct gender agreement with the counted noun.

That is, the first element, three to nine, behaves in gender like the cardinal numbers three to nine. The second element behaves more like an adjective, agreeing with the counted noun in gender.

With feminine counted noun:

thirteen	ثَلَاثَ عَشْرَةَ	thalaath-a 'ashrat-a
fourteen	أَرْبَعَ عَشْرَةَ	'arba'-a 'ashrat-a
fifteen	خَمْسَ عَشْرَةَ	xams-a 'ashrat-a
sixteen	سِتَّ عَشْرَةَ	sitt-a 'ashrat-a
seventeen	سَبْعَ عَشْرَةَ	sab'-a 'ashrat-a
eighteen	ثَمَانِيَةَ عَشْرَةَ	thamaaniy-a 'ashrat-a
nineteen	تِسْعَ عَشْرَةَ	tis'-a 'ashrat-a

With masculine counted noun:

ثَلَاثَةَ عَشَرَ	thalaathat-a 'ashar-a
أَرْبَعَةَ عَشَرَ	'arba'-at-a 'ashar-a
خَمْسَةَ عَشَرَ	xamsat-a 'ashar-a
سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ	sittat-a 'ashar-a
سَبْعَةَ عَشَرَ	sab'-at-a 'ashar-a
ثَمَانِيَةَ عَشَرَ	thamaaniyat-a 'ashar-a
تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ	tis'-at-a 'ashar-a

1.5.1 Indefinite counted noun

يبلغ طوله ثلاثة عشر متراً.
 ya-blugh-u Tuul-u-hu thalaathat-a 'ashar-a mitr-an.
 Its length reaches thirteen meters.

فازوا بأربع عشرة ميدالية.
 faaz-uu bi-'arba'-a 'ashrat-a
 miidaaliyyat-an.

They won fourteen medals.

ثمن الجريدة خمسة عشر ريالاً.
 thaman-u l-jariidat-i xamsat-a 'ashar-a riyaal-an.

The cost of the newspaper is fifteen rials.

يضم تسع عشرة شقة.
 ya-Dumm-u tis'-a 'ashrat-a shaqqat-an.
 It contains nineteen apartments.

على مدى خمسة عشر عاماً
 'alaa madaa xamsat-a 'ashar-a
 'aam-an

over a period of fifteen years

لمدة ست عشرة سنة
 li-muddat-i sitt-a 'ashrat-a sanat-an
 for a period of sixteen years

عن سبعة عشر نائباً
 ‘an sab‘at-a ‘ashar-a naa’ib-an
 from seventeen representatives

عن خمسة عشر عضواً كردياً
 ‘an xamsat-a ‘ashar-a ‘uDw-an
 kurdiyy-an
 from fifteen Kurdish members¹⁰

1.5.2 Definite counted noun

A definite counted noun with a teens numeral is **in the plural, followed by the teens numeral** prefixed with the definite article. The article is on only the first part of the numeral compound, not the second part. Whereas the counted noun in this situation may be in any case that its role in the sentence requires, the **teens numeral remains invariably in the accusative case**. The first part of the compound number shows gender polarity.

في الغرف التسع عشرة
 fii l-ghuraf-i l-tis‘a ‘asharat-a
 in the nineteen rooms

الأعضاء الخمسة عشر
 al-‘a‘Daa’-u l-xamsat-a ‘ashr-a
 the fifteen members

1.5.3 In independent form

When counting or listing the numerals by themselves, the form with the feminine marker on the first element is used, i.e., *xamsat-a ‘ashar-a*, *sittat-a ‘ashar-a*, *sab‘at-a ‘ashar-a* ‘fifteen, sixteen, seventeen.’

1.6 Numerals twenty to ninety-nine

The even tens numerals are constructed as a numeral stem joined with a sound masculine plural suffix that inflects two ways for case, *-uuna* for the nominative and *-iina* for genitive-accusative.¹¹ These even tens numerals themselves **do not show any gender distinctions** or differences.

The numbers twenty to ninety-nine are followed by a **singular accusative counted noun**, which is a form of *tamyiiz*, or accusative of specification.

twenty	‘ishruuna/ ‘ishriina ¹²	عشرون/عشرين
thirty	thalaathuuna/thalaathiina	ثلاثون/ثلاثين
forty	‘arba‘uuna/ ‘arba‘iina	أربعون/أربعين

¹⁰ Note that the adjective agrees strictly with the counted noun and is singular, although the meaning is plural.

¹¹ In spoken Arabic, the tens numbers are reduced to one case, the genitive-accusative. However, in written Arabic, the case distinction is still maintained if the number is written out.

¹² The base form for this number appears to be from the lexical root for “ten,” and it has been theorized that originally, it might have been something like *‘ishr-aani ‘two-tens’ and that the dual suffix came subsequently to resemble the other tens suffixes by a process of analogy.

fifty	xamsuuna/xamsiina	خمسون / خمسين
sixty	sittuuna/sittiina	ستون / ستين
seventy	sab ^c uuna/sab ^c iina	سبعون / سبعين
eighty	thamaanuuna/thamaaniina	ثمانون / ثمانين
ninety	tis ^c uuna/tis ^c iina	تسعون / تسعين

1.6.1 Indefinite counted noun

عشرون قرشاً في عشرين مجلداً
'ishruuna qirsh-an fii 'ishriina mujallad-an
 twenty piasters in twenty volumes

بمشاركة أكثر من أربعين دار نشر
bi-mushaarakat-i 'akthar-a min 'arba'iina daar-a nashr-in
 with the participation of more than forty publishing houses

بعد مرور أكثر من ستين عاماً
ba'd-a muruur-i 'akthar-a min sittiina'aam-an
 after the passage of more than sixty years

خمسون من موظفي المحطة
*xamsuuna min muwaZZaf-ii l-maHaTTat-i*¹³
 fifty of the station employees

1.6.2 Plurals of tens

The plural form of the tens numerals is the sound feminine plural, which is suffixed to the genitive-accusative form of the number:

twenties	'ishriinaat	عشرينات
thirties	thalaathiinaat	ثلاثينات
forties	'arba'iinaat	أربعينات
fifties	xamsiinaat	خمسينات
sixties	sittiinaat	ستينات
seventies	sab ^c iinaat	سبعينات
eighties	thamaaniinaat	ثمانينات
nineties	tis ^c iinaat	تسعينات

¹³ Because the word *xamsuuna* here is followed by the preposition *min*, the counted noun is not governed by the numeral, but is plural.

بعد أزمة الثلاثينات الكبرى

ba^cd-a ʔazmat-i l-thalaathiinaat-i

l-kubraa

after the great crisis of the thirties

حتى السبعينات من القرن العشرين

Hattaa l-sab^ciinaat-i min-a l-qarn-i

l-^cishriina

up to the seventies of the twentieth century

1.6.3 Compound tens

To construct compound tens numerals, the first part of the compound is an indefinite number joined to the second by the conjunction *wa-* ‘and.’ The first digit shows case and gender as follows:

1.6.3.1 THE “ONES” AND “TWOS” The units twenty-one, thirty-one and so forth are constructed with the numeral “one” and then the tens component. The numeral “one” shows straight gender agreement with the noun. It can be either of the form *waaHid/ waaHida* or the form *ʔaHad/ʔiHdaa*.

The “twos” units inflect for case as duals and show straight gender agreement with the counted noun.

	With masculine counted noun:	With feminine counted noun:
twenty-one	وَاحِدٌ وَعِشْرُونَ <i>waaHid-un wa-^cishruuna</i>	وَاحِدَةٌ وَعِشْرُونَ <i>waaHidat-un wa-^cishruuna</i>
	OR	OR
	أَحَدٌ وَعِشْرُونَ <i>ʔaHad-un wa-^cishruuna</i>	إِحْدَى وَعِشْرُونَ <i>ʔiHdaa wa-^cishruuna</i>
twenty-two	اِثْنَانِ وَعِشْرُونَ <i>ithnaani wa-^cishruuna</i> اِثْنَيْنِ وَعِشْرُونَ <i>ithnayni wa-^cishruuna</i>	اِثْنَتَانِ وَعِشْرُونَ <i>ithnataani wa-^cishruuna</i> اِثْنَتَيْنِ وَعِشْرُونَ <i>ithnatayni wa-^cishruuna</i>

لمدة واحد وعشرين يوماً

li-muddat-i waaHid-in wa-^cishriina yawm-an

for a period of twenty-one days

في اثنتين وعشرين صفحة

fii thnatayni wa-^cishriina SafHat-an

in twenty-two pages

لمدة إحدى وعشرين سنة

li-muddat-i ʔiHdaa wa-^cishriina sanat-an

for a period of twenty-one years

لاثنين وعشرين أسبوعاً

li-thnayni wa-^cishriina ʔusbuu^c-an

for twenty-two weeks

1.6.3.2 TENS NUMERALS PLUS THREES TO NINES: Numerals such as twenty-four, seventy-six, thirty-five and so on are compounded of the single digit number linked to the tens numeral by means of the conjunction *wa-*, making combinations such as “four and twenty, six and seventy, five and thirty,” and so forth. Except for the numeral eight, which belongs to the defective declension, the single digits are triptote, they take nunation, and they show reverse gender with the counted noun. The counted noun is singular, indefinite, and accusative. Both parts of the numeral inflect for case.

(1) Indefinite counted noun:

بعد أربع وعشرين ساعة
ba^cd-a ^ʾarba^c-in wa-^ʿishriina
saa^cat-an
 after twenty-four hours

أكثر من خمسة وخمسين فيلماً
^ʾakthar-u min xamsat-in wa-xamsiina
fiilm-an
 more than fifty-five films

تنافسوا في ثمان وعشرين لعبة.
tanaafas-uu fii thamaan-in wa-^ʿishriina la^cbat-an.
 They competed in twenty-eight sports.

عمره ثلاثة وستون عاماً.
^ʿumr-u-hu thalaathat-un wa-sittuuna ^ʿaam-an.
 He is sixty-three years old (‘His age is sixty-three years’).

(2) Definite counted noun: With a definite counted noun from 20 to 99, the numeral comes first and has the definite article, followed by the singular indefinite noun in the accusative case:

عليّ بابا والأربعون لصاً
^ʿaliyy baabaa wa-l-^ʾarba^ʿuuna liSS-an
 Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

طوال الثلاثين سنة الماضية
Tiwaal-a l-thalaathiina sanat-an-i
l-maaDiyat-i
 during the past thirty years

أسماء الله الحسنى التسعة وتسعون
^ʾasmaa^ʾ-u llaah-i l-Husnaa l-tis^ʾat-u wa-tis^ʾuuna
 the ninety-nine attributes of God

1.7 The even hundreds

The word for “hundred” in Arabic is *mi^ʾa*, spelled both as مئة and مائة. It is a feminine noun and remains feminine at all times. When used with a counted noun, it goes into an *^ʾiDaafa* relationship with the noun and that noun is in the genitive singular. The concept of “two hundred” is expressed by using *mi^ʾa* in the dual, with the dual suffix. The dual suffix here obeys the law of *nuun-drop* when it goes into an *^ʾiDaafa* with a following counted noun:

one hundred	مئة	
	<i>mi'a</i>	
two hundred	مئتان	(nominative)
	<i>mi'at-aani</i>	
	مئتين	(accusative/genitive)
	<i>mi'at-ayni</i>	

1.7.1 Counting in even one and two hundreds

مئة قنبلة يدوية	مئة كيلومتر شرق عدن
<i>mi'at-u qunbulat-in yadawiyyat-in</i>	<i>mi'at-u kiiluumitr-in sharq-a 'adan-a</i>
100 hand grenades	100 kilometers east of Aden

لمدة مئة يوم	مئتا فلس	بمئتي دولار
<i>li-muddat-i mi'at-i yawm-in</i>	<i>mi'at-aa fils-in</i>	<i>bi-mi'at-ay duulaar-in</i>
for a period of 100 days	200 fils (a unit of currency)	for 200 dollars

في جلساته حوالي مئة باحث.
fii jalsaat-i-hi Hawaalii mi'at-u baaHith-in.
 In its sessions [are] approximately 100 researchers.

1.7.2 Definite hundreds phrases

In this case, the word *mi'a* has the definite article, and the counted noun is genitive singular indefinite. In these examples, the hundreds phrase serves as the second term of an *'iDaafa*.

سباق المئة متر	بطل المئة متر
<i>sibaaq-u l-mi'at-i mitr-in</i>	<i>baTal-u l-mi'at-i mitr-in</i>
the hundred-meter race	the champion of the hundred meters

1.7.2.1 EXPRESSING 'PERCENT': To express the concept of percent, the term *fii l-mi'at-i* or *bi-l-mi'at-i* is used:

مئة بالمئة	يملكان خمسة عشر في المئة من الشركة.
<i>mi'at-un bi-l-mi'at-i</i>	<i>yu-mlik-aani xamsat-a 'ashar-a fii l-mi'at-i</i>
100 percent	<i>min-a l-sharikat-i.</i>
	The two of them own 15 percent of the company.

في نحو تسعين في المئة من البلديات الريفية
fii naHw-i tis'iina fii l-mi'at-i min-a l-baladiyyaat-i l-riifiyyat-i
 in approximately 90 percent of the rural municipalities

1.7.3 Three hundred to nine hundred

When the numeral is over two hundred, the hundred noun is counted by a numeral (in the masculine form because *mi'a* is feminine) followed by the word *mi'a* in the singular genitive form. This compound numeral may be written optionally as one word.

		One word	Two words
three hundred	<i>thalaath-u mi'at-in</i>	ثلاثمئة	ثلاث مئة
four hundred	<i>'arba'-u mi'at-in</i>	أربعمئة	أربع مئة
five hundred	<i>xams-u mi'at-in</i>	خمسمة	خمس مئة
six hundred	<i>sitt-u mi'at-in</i>	ستمئة	ست مئة
seven hundred	<i>sab'-u mi'at-in</i>	سبعمة	سبع مئة
eight hundred	<i>thamaanii mi'at-in</i>	ثمانيمئة	ثماني مئة
nine hundred	<i>tis'-u mi'at-in</i>	تسعمة	تسع مئة

The following counted noun is **genitive, singular, and indefinite**:

1.7.3.1 INDEFINITE COUNTED NOUN

أربع مئة مليم	من خمس مئة متر مكعب
<i>'arba'-u mi'at-i miliim-in</i>	<i>min xams-i mi'at-i mitr-in muka'ab-in</i>
400 millemes	from 500 cubic meters

في غضون خمس مئة ساعة دراسية
fii ghuDuun-i xams-i mi'at-i saa'at-in diraasiyyat-in
 during 500 study hours

1.8 Complex numerals with hundred

When counting in the hundreds, the word *mi'a* comes first joined to the second part of the numeral by the conjunction *wa-* 'and.' For example:

107 مئة وسبعة	119 مئة وتسعة عشر
<i>mi'at-un wa-sabt'at-un</i>	<i>mi'at-un wa-tis'at-a 'ashar-a</i>
a hundred and seven	a hundred and nineteen
150 مئة وخمسون	275 مئتان وخمسة وسبعون
<i>mi'at-un wa-xamsuuna</i>	<i>mi'at-aani wa-xamsat-un wa-sab'uuna</i>
a hundred and fifty	two hundred and seventy-five
	('two hundred and five and seventy')

440 أربع مئة وأربعون
 'arba^c-u mi^oat-in wa^o-arba-uuna
 four hundred and forty

623 ست مئة وثلاثة وعشرون
 sitt-u mi^oat-in wa-thalaathat-un
 wa-^cishruuna
 six hundred and twenty-three
 ('six hundred and three and twenty')

1.8.1 Counting with complex numerals in the hundreds

The second part of the number, being the part directly adjacent to the following noun, is the part that determines the case and number of the counted noun.

1.8.1.1 LAST PART IS 3–10 FOLLOWED BY GENITIVE PLURAL:

بُنيت قبل مئة وسبعة أعوام.
 buniy-at qabl-a mi^oat-in wa-sab^cat-i 'a^cwaam-in.
 It was built 107 years ago.

1.8.1.2 LAST PART IS 11–99 FOLLOWED BY ACCUSATIVE SINGULAR:

جاءوا من مئة وخمسين دولة.
 jaa^o-uu min mi^oat-in wa-xamsiina
 dawlat-an.
 They came from 150 countries.

مئتان وسبعون مندوباً
 mi^oat-aani wa-sab^cuuna manduub-an
 270 delegates

وصلت سرعة الرياح إلى مئة وسبعين كيلومتراً في الساعة.
 waSal-at sur^cat-u l-riyaaH-i 'ilaa mi^oat-in wa-sab^ciina kiiluumitr-an fii l-saa^cat-i.
 The wind speed reached 170 kilometers an hour.

1.8.2 Plural “hundreds”: مئآت *mi^oaat*

The word *mi^oa* is made plural with the sound feminine plural *mi^oaat*. When used for counting, *mi^oaat* is followed by either a definite noun in the genitive plural or the preposition *min* to express the “hundreds of” relationship.

أُغلقت مئآت المدارس.
 'ughliq-at mi^oaat-u l-madaaris-i.
 Hundreds of schools were closed.

أكثر من بضع مئآت من الأمثلة
 'akthar-u min biD^c-i mi^oaat-i min-a
 l-^oamthilat-i
 more than several hundreds of
 examples

مئآت الأطفال اللبنانيين
 mi^oaat-u l-^oaTfaal-i l-lubnaaniyy-iina
 hundreds of Lebanese children

ويجتمع المئات منهم.
 wa-yajtimi^c-u l-mi^oaat-u min-hum.
 Hundreds of them are meeting.

1.9 Thousands

The word for thousand in Arabic is *ʿalf* ألف, plural *ʿaalaaf* آلاف. It is a masculine noun and is counted as any other masculine noun:

1,000	<i>ʿalf</i>	ألف
2,000	<i>ʿalf-aani/ʿalf-ayni</i>	ألفان / ألفين
3,000	<i>thalaathat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	ثلاثة آلاف
4,000	<i>ʿarbaʿat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	أربعة آلاف
5,000	<i>xamsat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	خمسة آلاف
6,000	<i>sittat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	ستة آلاف
7,000	<i>sabʿat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	سبعة آلاف
8,000	<i>thamaaniyat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	ثمانية آلاف
9,000	<i>tisʿat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	تسعة آلاف
10,000	<i>ʿasharat-u ʿaalaaf-in</i>	عشرة آلاف
11,000	<i>ʿaHad-a ʿashar-a ʿalf-an</i>	أحد عشر ألفاً
12,000	<i>ithnaa ʿashar-a ʿalf-an</i>	اثنا عشر ألفاً
15,000	<i>xamsat-a ʿashar-a ʿalf-an</i>	خمسة عشر ألفاً
20,000	<i>ʿishruuna ʿalf-an</i>	عشرون ألفاً
25,000	<i>xamsat-un wa-ʿishruuna ʿalf-an</i>	خمسة وعشرون ألفاً
100,000	<i>miʿat-u ʿalf-in</i>	مئة ألف
200,000	<i>miʿat-aa ʿalf-in</i>	مئتا ألف
475,000	<i>ʿarbaʿ-u miʿat-in wa-xamsat-un wa-sabʿuuna ʿalf-an</i>	أربع مئة وخمسة وسبعون ألفاً

1.9.1 Counting in thousands

When used for counting, the numeral *ʿalf/ʿaalaaf* goes into an *ʿiDaafa* relationship with the following noun, which is in the **genitive singular**. In complex numerals over a thousand (as with *miʿa*), it is the **final component of the numeral that determines the number (singular or plural) and case of the counted noun**.

أمّا عدد الفنادق فيبلغ أربعة آلاف منشأة.

ʿammaa ʿadad-u l-fanaadiq-i fa-ya-blugh-u ʿarbaʿat-a ʿaalaaf-i munshaʿat-in.

As for the number of hotels, it reaches 4,000 establishments.

أكثر من أحد عشر ألف رياضيّ جاءوا.

ʔakthar-u min ʔaHad-a ʔashar-a ʔalf-a riyaaDiyy-in jaaʔ-uu.

More than 11,000 athletes came.

أكثر من ثلاثة عشر ألف كتاب

ʔakthar-u min thalaathat-a ʔashar-a ʔalf-a kitaab-in

more than 13,000 books

مئة وثلاثة وخمسون ألف كردي

miʔat-un wa-thalaathat-un wa-xamsuuna ʔalf-a kurdiyy-in

153,000 Kurds

ثلاثة آلاف وأربع مئة واثنان وثلاثون كيلومتراً مربعاً

thalaathat-u ʔaalaaf-in wa-ʔarbaʔ-u miʔat-in wa-thnaani wa-thalaathuuna

kiiluumitr-an murabbaʔ-an

3,432 square kilometers

خسرت نحو أربع مئة وخمسين ألف وظيفة.

xasar-at naHw-a ʔarbaʔ-i miʔat-in wa xamsiina ʔalf-a waZiifat-in.

It has lost approximately 450,000 jobs.

1.9.2 Special cases

For the even thousands plus “one” or “two,” a special construction exists in Classical Arabic, although no instances of it were encountered in the data covered for this project.

1001 nights ألف ليلة وليلة

ʔalf-u laylat-in wa-laylat-un (‘a thousand nights and a night’)

2002 nights ألفا ليلة وليلتان

ʔalf-aa laylat-in wa-laylat-aani (‘two thousand nights and two nights’)

1.10 Reading years in dates

Because Arabic has two words for ‘year,’ *ʔaam* عام / *ʔaʔwaam* (masculine) and *sana* سنة / *sanawaat* سنوات (feminine), the numbers in year dates can vary in gender. When reading year dates, the word for ‘year’ (either *ʔaam* or *sana*) precedes the numeral expression and is in an *ʔiDaafa* with it, so that the date itself is the second term of the *ʔiDaafa* and is in the genitive case.

Because of the reverse gender rule, if the masculine noun *ʔaam* is used, then any 3–10 digit is feminine, and if the feminine noun *sana* is used, then any 3–10 digit is in the masculine.

In general, either the phrase ‘in the year’ *fii ʔaam-i* or *fii sanat-i* is used, or the word *ʔaam-a* or *sanat-a* is used in the accusative (time adverbial). Sometimes these phrases are understood and not explicitly mentioned.

1.10.1 'in the year 711'

1.10.1.1 USING *sana*

في سنة سبع مئة وإحدى عشرة
fii sanat-i sab^c-i mi^oat-in wa-^oiHdaa 'ashrat-a

سنة سبع مئة وإحدى عشرة
sanat-a sab^c-i mi^oat-in wa-^oiHdaa 'ashrat-a

1.10.1.2 USING *'aam*:

في عام سبع مئة وأحد عشر
fii 'aam-i sab^c-i mi^oat-in wa-^oaHad-a 'ashar-a

عام سبع مئة وأحد عشر
'aam-a sab^c-i mi^oat-in wa-^oaHad-a 'ashar-a

1.10.2 'in the year 1956'

1.10.2.1 USING *sana*

في سنة ألف وتسع مئة وست وخمسين
fii sanat-i 'alf-in wa-tis^c-i mi^oat-in wa-sitt-in wa-xamsiina

سنة ألف وتسع مئة وست وخمسين
sanat-a 'alf-in wa-tis^c-i mi^oat-in wa-sitt-in wa-xamsiina

1.10.2.2 USING *'aam*:

في عام ألف وتسع مئة وستة وخمسين
fii 'aam-i 'alf-in wa-tis^c-i mi^oat-in wa-sittat-in wa-xamsiina

عام ألف وتسع مئة وستة وخمسين
'aam-a 'alf-in wa-tis^c-i mi^oat-in wa-sittat-in wa-xamsiina

1.10.3 'in the year 1998'

1.10.3.1 USING *sana*

في سنة ألف وتسع مئة وثمان وتسعين
fii sanat-i 'alf-in wa-tis^c-i mi^oat-in wa-thamaanin wa-tis^ciina

سنة ألف وتسع مئة وثمان وتسعين
sanat-a 'alf-in wa-tis^c-i mi^oat-in wa-thamaanin wa-tis^ciina

1.10.3.2 USING 'aam:

في عام ألف وتسع مئة وثمانية وتسعين

fii 'aam-i 'alf-in wa-tis-i mi'at-in wa-thamaaniyat-in wa-tis'iina

عام ألف وتسع مئة وثمانية وتسعين

'aam-a 'alf-in wa-tis-i mi'at-in wa-thamaaniyat-in wa-tis'iina

1.10.4 'in the year 2001'

1.10.4.1 USING sana

في سنة ألفين وواحدة

fii sanat-i 'alf-ayni wa-waaHidat-in

سنة ألفين وواحدة

sanat-a 'alf-ayni wa-waaHidat-in

1.10.4.2 USING 'aam

في عام ألفين وواحد

fii 'aam-i 'alf-ayni wa-waaHidat-in

عام ألفين وواحد

'aam-a 'alf-ayni wa-waaHidat-in

NB: In practice, when saying year dates out loud, short vowel case endings are often omitted.

1.11 Millions and billions

Arabic has borrowed the terms "million" (*milyuun* مليون /*malaayiin* ملايين) and "billion" (*bilyuun* بليون /*balaayiin* بلايين), using them in much the same way as the terms for hundred and thousand. The names of the numerals themselves are masculine and when counting, they form the first term of an *'iDaafa* with the following noun, which is **genitive singular**.

انتاج الولايات المتحدة من النفط يقارب مليون برميل يوميا.

'intaaj-u l-wilaayaat-i l-muttaHidat-i min-a l-naft-i yu-qaarib-u milyuun-a barmiil-in yawmiyy-an.

The oil production of the United States approaches a **million barrels** daily.

عشرون مليون مشترك

'ishruuna milyuun-a mushtarik-in

twenty million participants

ببليوني دولار

bi-bilyuun-ay duulaar-in

for two billion dollars

يتجاوز ثمنها ثلاثة بلايين دولار.

ya-tajaawaz-u thaman-u-haa thalaathat-a balaayiin-i duulaar-in.

Their cost exceeds **three billion dollars**.

مئة مليون دولار ليست مستغربة.

mi'at-u milyuun-i duulaar-in lays-at mustaghrabat-an.

A **hundred million dollars** is not unusual.

2 Ordinal numerals

Ordinal numerals are essentially adjectives. They usually follow the noun that they modify and agree with it in gender, but sometimes they precede the noun as the first term of an *ʿiDaafa* structure. Occasionally they may also be used as independent substantives (i.e., “**the fifth** of May”; “**twenty seconds**”).

2.1 ‘First:’ *ʾawwal* أول and *ʾuulaa* أولى

The Arabic words for “first” are *ʾawwal* (m.) and *ʾuulaa* (f.). They can either follow the noun they modify or precede it as first term of an *ʿiDaafa*.

2.1.1 *ʾawwal*

The word *ʾawwal* (plural *ʾawaaʾil*) may function as the first term of an *ʿiDaafa* structure, as an adjective following a noun, or as an independent noun.

2.1.1.1 As first term of an *ʿiDaafa*, *ʾawwal* may be followed by either a masculine or feminine noun.

كان أول رجل في العالم يطبق الفكرة.
kaan-a ʾawwal-a rajul-in fii l-ʿaalam-i yu-Tabbiq-u l-fikrat-a.
 He was **the first man** in the world to apply the idea.

وفقاً لأول إحصاء للسكان
wafq-an li-ʾawwal-i ʾiHSaaʾ-in li-l-sukkaan-i
 in conformity with the **first statistics** of the population

كان أول من ألقى كلمة.
kaan-a ʾawwal-a man ʾalqaa kalimat-an.
 He was **the first** to give a speech.

بدأ أول زيارة له لليمن.
badaʾ-a ʾawwal-a ziyaarat-in la-hu li-l-yaman-i.
 He started his **first trip** to Yemen.

وقد كانتا أول رياضيتين من الخليج تشاركان في الألعاب الأولمبية.
wa-qad kaan-ataa ʾawwal-a riyaaDiyyat-ayni min-a l-xaliij-i tu-shaarik-aani fii
l-ʾalʿaab-i l-ʾuuliimbiyyat-i.

They were **the first two female athletes** from the Gulf to participate in the Olympic Games.

2.1.1.2 ‘THE FIRST’: The word *ʾawwal* may also be used independently and followed by a preposition to convey the meaning of ‘the first of; first among’:

يُعتبر الأول من نوعه.
yu-ʿtabar-u l-ʾawwal-a min nawʿ-i-hi.
 It is considered **the first** of its kind.

تناول الأول منها الوضع السياسي.

tanaawal-a l-^oawwal-u min-haa l-waD^e-a l-siyaasiyy-a.

The first of them dealt with the political situation.

اللقب هو الأول بين الألقاب الخمسة.

al-laqaab-u huwa l-^oawwal-u bayn-a l-^oalqaab-i l-xamsat-i.

The title is the first of ('among') the five titles.

2.1.1.3 PLURAL OF ^oawwal: ^oawaa'il أوائل : The word ^oawwal has a plural, ^oawaa'il, which can mean 'the first [ones],' the 'earliest [parts],' or the 'most prominent.'

كان من أوائل الدول العربية.

kaan-a min ^oawaa'il-i l-duwal-i
l-^earabiyyat-i.

It was among the most prominent Arab countries.

في أوائل الشهر الماضي

fii ^oawaa'il-i l-shahr-i l-maaDii
in the first part of last month

2.1.2 ^ouulaa أولى

The feminine word ^ouulaa 'first' is invariable, i.e., it does not inflect for case. It can occur in either of two structures:

2.1.2.1 AS AN ADJECTIVE FOLLOWING A NOUN:

للمرة الأولى

li-l-marrat-i l-^ouulaa
for the first time

أحد المشاريع الثلاثة الأولى

^oaHad-u l-mashaarii^e-i l-thalaathat-i l-^ouulaa
one of the first three projects

القناة الأولى

al-qanaat-u l-^ouulaa
channel one

('the first channel')

أعطيت الأوليّة الأولى لمياه الشرب.

^ou^e Tiy-at-i l-^oawwaliyyat-u l-^ouulaa li-miyaah-i
l-shurb-i.

The first priority was given to drinking water.

الرحلة الجوية الأولى

al-riHlat-u l-jawwiyyat-u l-^ouulaa
the first air trip

في الساعات الأولى من الصباح

fii l-saa^eaat-i l-^ouulaa min-a l-SabaaH-i
in the first hours of the morning

2.1.2.2 AS THE FIRST TERM OF AN ^oiDaafa WITH A FOLLOWING FEMININE WORD: This construction is not frequent, but may occur.

كسب السعوديون أولى مبارياتهم.

kasab-a l-sa^euudiyy-uuna ^ouulaa mubaarayaat-i-him.

The Saudis won the first of their matches.

2.2 Second through tenth

The words “second” through “tenth” have the pattern of the active participle of a Form I verb: *faaʿil* or *faaʿila*.

Masculine/Feminine		
second	<i>thaanin/thaaniya</i> ¹⁴	ثَانٍ / ثَانِيَة
third	<i>thaalith/haalitha</i>	ثَالِث / ثَالِثَة
fourth	<i>raabiʿ/raabiʿa</i>	رَابِع / رَابِعَة
fifth	<i>xaamis/xaamisa</i>	خَامِس / خَامِسَة
sixth	<i>saadis/saadisa</i> ¹⁵	سَادِس / سَادِسَة
seventh	<i>saabiʿ/saabiʿa</i>	سَابِع / سَابِعَة
eighth	<i>thaamin/thaamina</i>	ثَامِن / ثَامِنَة
ninth	<i>taasiʿ/taasiʿa</i>	تَاسِع / تَاسِعَة
tenth	<i>ʿaashir/ʿaashira</i>	عَاشِر / عَاشِرَة

These adjectival forms of the numbers usually follow the noun that they modify, agreeing with the noun in gender, definiteness, and case.

مرّة ثانية <i>marrat-an thaaniyat-an</i> a second time; another time	ثَمّة مشرّوع ثان. <i>thammāt-a mashruuʿ-un thaān-in.</i> There is a second plan.
انتهى أمس في لندن المؤتمر الثاني. <i>intahaa ʾamsi fii lundun-a l-muʿtamar-u l-thaanii.</i> The second conference ended yesterday in London.	أصبح خامس أعلى ثمن. <i>ʾaSbaH-a xaamis-a ʾaʿlaa thaman-in.</i> It became the fifth highest price.

في معظم القسم الثاني من الكتاب <i>fii muʿZam-i l-qism-i l-thaanii min-a l-kitaab-i</i> in most of the second part of the book	في الذكرى الخامسة <i>fii l-dhikraa l-xaamisat-i</i> on the fifth anniversary
نجح في محاولته الثالثة. <i>najaH-a fii muHaawalat-i-hi l-thaalithat-i.</i> He succeeded on his third try.	العالم الثالث <i>al-ʿaalam-u l-thaalith-u</i> the Third World

¹⁴ The masculine form of the word for ‘second’ *thaanin* (pl. *thawaanin*) is a defective adjective and inflects for case and definiteness in declension six. See Chapter 7, section 5.4.3.

¹⁵ The adjective *saadis* ‘sixth’ has a related but different lexical root (*s-d-s*) from the root for ‘six’ (*s-t-t*).

تحتلّ الشركة المرتبة الرابعة عالمياً.

ta-Htall-u l-sharikat-u l-martabat-a l-raabi^cat-a ^caalamiyy-an.

The company ranks fourth worldwide ('occupies the fourth rank').

2.2.1 Ordinal numeral as first term of *'iDaafa*

Occasionally, an ordinal numeral will precede the noun it modifies, as the first term of an *'iDaafa* structure. In this case it is usually the masculine form of the number that is used, even if the following noun is feminine:

في ثاني زيارة له

fii thaanii ziyarat-in la-hu

on his second visit

ثالث المشروعات التجريبية مشروع ريّ.

thaalith-u l-mashruu^caat-i l-tajriibiyyat-i mashruu^c-u rayy-in.

The third of the experimental projects is an irrigation project.

يصبح ثالث عداء فقط يحمل اللقب العالميّ.

yu-Sbih-u thaalith-a ^caddaa³-in faqaT ya-Hmil-u l-laqaab-a l-^caalamiyy-a.

He becomes only the third runner to hold the world championship.

2.2.2 Ordinals as nouns: *thaanin/thaanii*

The ordinal "second" may be used as a substantive. In its masculine singular form, as a final-weak noun, it is in the defective declension.

في الثاني من أيار

fii l-thaanii min ³ayyaar-a

on the second of May

As a unit of time measurement, "second" in Arabic is feminine *thaaniya* ثانية with a broken defective plural, *thawaanin* ثوان.

بسرعة ستّة كيلومترات في الثانية

bi-sur^cat-i sittat-i kiiluumitraat-in fii l-thaaniyat-i

at the rate of six kilometers per second

أحرزت ذهبية مسجلة ٧٥، ١٠ ثوان.

³aHraz-at dhahabiyyat-an musajjilat-an 10.75 thawaanin.

She won a gold [medal] registering [a time of] 10.75 seconds.

2.2.2.1 OTHER FORMS OF ORDINALS AS NOUNS: In addition to "second" as a noun, other ordinals may also be used in this way, especially when referring to days of the month:

في الثامن من تشرين الأول

fii l-thaamin-i min tishriina l-'awwal-i

on the eighth of October

في الخامس من شباط

fii l-xaamis-i min shubaaT-a

on the fifth of February

2.3 Eleventh through nineteenth

These compound adjectives consist of the tens ordinal numeral plus a masculine or feminine form of the word for “ten” ‘*ashar-a* or ‘*ashrat-a*. Both parts of the compound adjective agree in gender with the noun they modify. However, both parts of the compound teens ordinal are always in the accusative case, no matter what the case of the noun they are modifying. The definite article goes on the first element of the compound only.

eleventh	الحادي عشر al-Haadiy-a ‘ashr-a	الحادية عشرة al-Haadiyat-a ‘ashrat-a
twelfth	الثاني عشر al-thaaniy-a ‘ashar-a	الثانية عشرة al-thaaniyat-a ‘ashrat-a
thirteenth	الثالث عشر al-thaalith-a ‘ashar-a	الثالثة عشرة al-thaalithat-a ‘ashrat-a
fourteenth	الرابع عشر al-raabi‘-a ‘ashar-a	الرابعة عشرة al-raabi‘at-a ‘ashrat-a
fifteenth	الخامس عشر al-xaamis-a ‘ashar-a	الخامسة عشرة al-xaamisat-a ‘ashrat-a
sixteenth	السادس عشر al-saadis-a ‘ashar-a	السادسة عشرة al-saadisat-a ‘ashrat-a
seventeenth	السابع عشر al-saabi‘-a ‘ashar-a	السابعة عشرة al-saabi‘at-a ‘ashrat-a
eighteenth	الثامن عشر al-thaamin-a ‘ashar-a	الثامنة عشرة al-thaaminat-a ‘ashrat-a
nineteenth	التاسع عشر al-taasi‘-a ‘ashr-a	التاسعة عشرة al-taasi‘at-a ‘ashrat-a
المعرض السنوي الحادي عشر al-ma‘raD-u l-sanawiyy-u l-Haadiy-a ‘ashar-a the eleventh annual exhibition		في دورتها الخامسة عشرة fii dawrat-i-haa l-xaamisat-a ‘ashrat-a in its fifteenth session

يعود تاريخها إلى القرن الثاني عشر.

ya-ʿuud-u taariikh-u-haa ʿilaa l-qarn-i l-thaaniy-a ʿashar-a.

Its history goes back to the twelfth century.

فتى في الرابعة عشرة من العمر

fatan fii l-raabiʿat-a ʿashrat-a min-a l-ʿumr-i

a youth in his fourteenth year ('the fourteenth [year] of age')

في الذكرى الرابعة عشرة

fii l-dhikraa l-raabiʿat-a ʿashrat-a

on the fourteenth anniversary

في القرن الخامس عشر الميلادي

fii l-qarn-i l-xaamis-a ʿashar-a l-miilaadiyy-i

in the fifteenth century AD

افتتح المسابقة المحلية السادسة عشرة.

iftataH-a l-musaabaqat-a l-maHaliyyat-a l-saadisat-a ʿashrat-a.

He opened the sixteenth local competition.

2.4 Twentieth to ninety-ninth

The ordinals for the group of numerals from twenty to ninety-nine are of two types: straight tens ("twentieth, fortieth, eightieth") and compound tens ("twenty-first, forty-fifth, fifty-third"). In both cases the tens component does not vary from its numeral shape. That is, twentieth (*ʿishruuna* عشرون) and twenty (*ʿishruuna*) look the same. However, as an adjective, *ʿishruuna* may take a definite article, and it agrees in case with the noun it modifies. It remains invariable in gender.

في القرن العشرين

fii l-qarn-i l-ʿishriina

in the twentieth century

في العيد الخمسين لاستقلالها

fii l-ʿiid-i l-xamsiina l-istiqlaal-i-haa

on the 50th anniversary of its
independence

تحتفل بيوم ميلادها الخمسين.

ta-Htafil-u bi-yawm-i miilaad-i-haa l-xamsiina.

She is celebrating her 50th birthday.

With the compound tens ordinals, the first part of the compound has the ordinal form of the number and agrees with the following noun in gender. Both parts of the tens ordinal agree in case and definiteness with the modified noun. Note that the word *Haad-in* حادي (def. *Haadii* حادي) is used to indicate 'first' in tens compounds.

في عيد ميلادها الحادي والعشرين

fii ʿiid-i miilaad-i-haa l-Haadii

wa-l-ʿishriina

on her twenty-first birthday

في القرن الحادي والعشرين

fii l-qarn-i l-Haadii wa-l-ʿishriina

in the twenty-first century

في المباراة الثامنة والعشرين

fii l-mubaaraat-i l-thaaminat-i wa-l-‘ishriina
in the twenty-eighth match

الذكرى الحادية والستون

al-dhikraa l-Haadiyat-u wa-l-sittuuna
the sixty-first anniversary

2.5 Hundredth

The ordinal expression for “hundredth” looks like the word “hundred.” It follows the noun it modifies and agrees in definiteness and case, but not in gender. It remains invariably feminine.

كان ترتيبه المئة.

kaan-a tartiib-u-hu l-mi’at-a.

His ranking was hundredth.

3 Other number-based expressions

3.1 Fractions

With the exception of the word for “half” (*niSf* نصف), fractions are of the pattern *fu’l* فعل / *af’aal* أفعال, based on the numeral root. In syntax, the fraction word normally acts as the first term of an *‘iDaafa* structure.

a half	<i>niSf / ‘anSaaf</i>	نِصْف / أَنْصَاف
a third	<i>thulth / ‘athlaath</i>	ثُلُث / أَثْلَاث
a fourth, a quarter	<i>rub / ‘arbaa’</i>	رُبْع / أَرْبَاع
a fifth	<i>xums / ‘axmaas</i>	خُمْس / أَخْمَاس
a sixth	<i>suds / ‘asdaas</i>	سُدْس / أَسْدَاس
a seventh	<i>sub / ‘asbaa’</i>	سَبْع / أَسْبَاع
an eighth	<i>thumn / ‘athmaan</i>	ثُمْن / أَثْمَان
a ninth	<i>tus / ‘atsaa’</i>	تَسْع / أَتْسَاع
a tenth	<i>‘ushr / ‘a’shaar</i>	عُشْر / أَعْشَار

نصف الأنواع المعروفة

niSf-u l-‘anwaa’-i l-ma’ruufat-i
half of the known species

نصف قرن من الزمان

niSf-u qarn-in min-a l-zamaan-i
half a century of time

ربع ريال

rub-‘u riyaa-l-in
a quarter of a rial

منذ ربع قرن

mundh-u rub-‘i qarn-in
a quarter of a century ago

يحتاج إلى ثلثي الأعضاء في مجلسي الكونغرس.

ya-Htaaj-u ʔilaa thulth-ay-i l-a^cDaa^o-i fii majlis-ay-i l-kunghris.

It requires **two-thirds** of the members of both houses of Congress.

3.1.1 Fractions as nouns

A fraction may function as a substantive or independent noun:

في النصف الثاني من القرن العشرين

fii l-niSf-i l-thaanii min-a l-qarn-i l-^cishriina

in the **second half** of the twentieth century

كانت ثقتنا بأنفسنا أقل في الربع الأول.

kaan-at thiqat-u-naa bi-ʔanfus-i-naa ʔaqall-a fii l-rub^c-i l-ʔawwal-i.

Our self-confidence was less in the **first quarter**.

3.1.2 Special functions of *niSf* نصف :

The term *niSf* may also function as the equivalent of “semi-” or “hemi-”:

في الاجتماع نصف السنوي

fii l-ijtima^c-i niSf-i l-sanawiyy-i

in the **semi-annual** meeting

نصف الكرة الشمالي

niSf-u l-kurat-i l-shimaaliyy-u

the northern **hemisphere**

And *niSf* also indicates the half-hour, as does English “thirty”:

حتى العاشرة والنصف صباحاً

Hattaa l-^caashirat-i wa-l-niSf-i SabaaH-an

until ten-**thirty** in the morning

3.2 Telling time

The ordinal numbers are used for telling time in MSA. The word “hour” (*saa^ca* ساعة) may or may not be mentioned, but the ordinal numeral is in the feminine form, agreeing with that noun.

في الساعة الثامنة

fii l-saa^c-at-i l-thaaminat-i

at eight o'clock (‘at the eighth hour’)

اليوم الأحد الساعة الحادية عشرة صباحاً

al-yawm-a l-ʔaHad-a l-saa^c-at-a l-Haadiyat-a ʔashrat-a SabaaH-an

today, Sunday, at 11:00 in the morning

Rather than expressions such as “seven-fifteen” or “seven-twenty” or “seven-thirty,” Arabic usually uses fractions of the hour: *rub^c*, *thulth*, and *niSf*:

في السابعة والرّبع من مساء غد

fii l-saabi°at-i wa-l-rub°-i min masaa°-i ghad-in

at seven-fifteen ('and the quarter') tomorrow evening

في السابعة إلا ربعاً من مساء غد

*fii l-saabi°at-i °illaa rub°-an min masaa°-i ghad-in*¹⁶

at 6:45 tomorrow evening (the seventh [hour] less a quarter)

في الخامسة والثلاث مساء أمس

fii l-xaamisat-i wa-l-thulth-i masaa°-a °ams-i

at 5:20 ('five and the third') yesterday evening

في الخامسة إلا ثلثاً مساء أمس

fii l-xaamisat-i illaa thulth-an masaa°-a °ams-i

at 4:40 ('five less a third') yesterday evening

في العاشرة والنصف مساء اليوم

fii l-°aashirat-i wa-l-niSf-i masaa°-a l-yawm-i

at ten-thirty ('ten and the half') this evening ('the evening of today')

The word for minute is *daqiiqa* دقيقة. In telling time, it is also used with an ordinal numeral:

الساعة الرابعة والدقيقة الخامسة

al-saa°at-u l-raabi°at-u wa-l-daqiiqat-u l-xaamisat-u

4:05 ('the fourth hour and the fifth minute')¹⁷

3.3 Days of the week

Most of the names of the days of the week are based on the numeral system, as follows:

Sunday	<i>al-°aHad</i>	الأحد
Monday	<i>al-ithnayn</i>	الاثنين
Tuesday	<i>al-thulaathaa°</i>	الثلاثاء
Wednesday	<i>al-°arbi°aa°</i>	الأربعاء
Thursday	<i>al-xamiis</i>	الخميس
Friday	<i>al-jum°a</i> ¹⁸	الجمعة
Saturday	<i>al-sabt</i> ¹⁹	السبت

¹⁶ The exceptive particle 'illaa ('less,' 'minus,' 'except for') takes the following noun in the accusative case. The following noun may be definite or indefinite.

¹⁷ For further examples of telling time, see Abboud and McCarus 1985, Part 1:301-303 and Schultz et al. 2000, 212-13.

¹⁸ The word for "Friday" is from the root *j-m-°* 'to gather together.'

¹⁹ The root for "Saturday" is cognate with the word "Sabbath."

When used in syntax, the names of the days may occur independently, with the definite article, or as the second term of an *ʿiDaafa* with the word *yawm* ‘day,’ or they may be in apposition with a time word, such as “yesterday,” “tomorrow,” or “today.”

3.3.1 Independent

الثلاثاء الماضي

al-thulaathaaʿ-a l-maaDiy-a

last Tuesday

الثلاثاء الجاري

al-thulaathaaʿ-a l-jaariy-a

next Tuesday

3.3.2 In an *ʿiDaafa* with the word *yawm* or *ʿayyam* (‘day/days’)

يوم الخميس

yawm-a l-xamiis-i

on Thursday

أيام الآحاد

ʿayyaam-a l-ʿaaHaad-i

on Sundays

أيام السبت وحدها

ʿayyaam-a l-sabt-i waHd-a-haa

only on Saturdays

3.3.3 In apposition

في القاهرة صباح غد الاثنين

fii l-qaahirat-i SabaaH-a ghad-in-i l-ithnayn-i

in Cairo, tomorrow morning, Monday

اليوم الأحد

al-yawm-a l-ʿaHad-a

today, Sunday

3.4 Number adjectives

These are adjectival forms of numbers that attribute a numerical quality to the item being described. They fall into two categories: the *fuʿaaliyy* فعالي pattern and the *mufaʿal* مفعّل (PP II) pattern.

3.4.1 *thunaaʿiyy* ثنائي ‘bilateral; two-sided’

معاهدات ثنائية مع دول أخرى

muʿaahadaat-un thunaaʿiyyat-un maʿ-a duwal-in ʿuxraa

bilateral agreements with other countries

استعرض الجانبان العلاقات الثنائية بين القطرين.

istaʿraD-a l-jaanib-aani l-ʿalaaqaat-i l-thunaaʿiyyat-a bayn-a l-quTr-ayni.

The two sides reviewed the bilateral relations between the two countries.

3.4.2 *thulaathiyy* ثلاثي ‘tripartite; trilateral’; *thulaathiyya* ثلاثية ‘trilogy’

اللجنة الثلاثية في جنيف

al-lajnat-u l-thulaathiyyat-u fii jiniif

the tripartite committee in Geneva

أفعال ثلاثية

ʿafʿaal-un thulaathiyyat-un

trilateral (lexical) roots

أَنَّ مِصْرَ وَقَّعَتْ عَامَ ١٩٧٨ اتِّفَاقًا ثَلَاثِيًّا

^ʔanna miSr-a waqqa^ʕ-at ^ʕaam-a 1978 ittiffaaq-an thulaathiyy-an

that Egypt signed in the year 1978 a tripartite/trilateral agreement

يَعْمَلُ الْآنَ عَلَى إِنْجَازِ ثَلَاثِيَّتِهِ.

ya-^ʕmal-u l-^ʔaan-a ^ʕalaa ^ʔinjaaz-i thulaathiyyat-i-hi.

He is working now to complete his trilogy.

3.2.3 *rubaa^ʕiyy* رُبَاعِيّ ‘quadrilateral; four-part’

أَفْعَالُ رُبَاعِيَّةٍ

^ʔaf^ʕaal-un rubaa^ʕiyyat-un

quadrilateral verb roots

3.2.4 *mufa^ʕal* مَفْعَلٌ

This number adjective takes the form of a Form II passive participle and is used to refer to something with a characteristic number of sides or features:

مِثْلَثٌ

muthallath

triangle (n.); threefold (adj.)

مُرَبَّعٌ

murabba^ʕ

square (n. and adj.)

ثَلَاثَةُ آلَافٍ وَأَرْبَعُ مِئَةٍ وَثَلَاثُونَ كِيلُومِتْرًا مُرَبَّعًا

thalaathat-u ^ʔaalaaf-in wa-arba^ʕ-u mi^ʔ-at-in wa-thalaathuuna kiiluumitr-an *murabba^ʕ-an*

3,430 square kilometers

مِسْدَسٌ

musaddas

six-shooter, gun, revolver; also: hexagonal

مِسْدَسٌ لَعِيَّةٌ

musaddas-un lu^ʕbat-un

toy gun

4 Expressions of serial order: “last”

We have already seen the use of expressions for “first” and other numerical rankings. The concept of “last” or “final” is expressed by the terms ^ʔaaxir or ^ʔaxiir. They are both from the same lexical root but are different in form and distribution.

4.1 ^ʔaaxir آخر ‘last, final’

The noun ^ʔaaxir is an active participle in form, signifying the final part or the end part of something. Its plural is ^ʔawaaxir أَوَاخِر if it refers to nonhuman entities, and ^ʔaaxir-uuna آخِرُونَ (m. pl.) or ^ʔaaxir-aat آخِرَات (f. pl.) if it refers to humans. It is often used as the first term of an ^ʔiDaafa.

آخر كلمة

^oaaxir-u kalimat-in

the last word

آخر الأنباء الواردة من الخرطوم

^oaaxir-u l-^oanbaa^o-i l-waaridat-i min-a

l-kharTuum-i

the latest/last news ('arriving') from
Khartoum

آخر وزير للخارجية

^oaaxir-u waziir-in li-l-xaarijiyyat-i

the last foreign minister

في أواخر آذار المقبل

fii ^oawaaxir-i ^oaadhaar-a l-muqbil-i

in the last [part] of next March

في آخر مقابلة له مع الصحيفة

fii ^oaaxir-i muqaabalat-in la-hu

ma^c-a l-SaHiifat-i

in his last interview with the
newspaper

عند الطابور

^cind-a ^oaaxir-i l-Taabuur-i

at the end of the line

لعب المنتخب السعودي آخر مبارياته في الرياض.

la^cib-a l-muntaxib-u l-sa^cuudiyy-u ^oaaxir-a mubaariyaat-i-hi fii l-riyaaD-i.

The Saudi team played its last match in Riyadh.

4.2 ^oaxiir 'last; final'

The word ^oaxiir is an adjective meaning 'final' or 'last' both in the sense of 'final' and of 'past.' It usually follows the noun and is in concord with it in terms of gender, case, definiteness, and number.

الجملة الأخيرة

al-jumlat-u l-^oaxiirat-u

the last sentence

وضع المسمار الأخير.

waDa^c-a l-mismaar-a l-^oaxiir-a

He put [in] the last nail.

في الأعوام الأخيرة

fii l-^oa^cwaam-i l-^oaxiirat-i

in the last years

4.2.1 In the accusative indefinite, it is used as an adverb meaning "finally":

وأخيراً جاءت إلى القاهرة.

wa-^oaxiir-an jaa^o-at ^oilaa l-qaahirat-i.

And finally she came to Cairo.

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

1 Overview

In Arabic as in English, prepositions refer to a location (e.g., ‘at, in’ في *fii*, *bi-* ب) or a direction (e.g., ‘to, from’ إلى *’ilaa*, *min* من), and the meanings of prepositions can apply to concepts of space (‘at school’ *fii l-madrasat-i* في المدرسة) or time (‘at five o’clock’ *fii l-saa’at-i l-xaamisat-i* في الساعة الخامسة).

Prepositions may also be used in abstract or figurative ways (‘at least’ *’alaa l-’aqaall-i* على الأقل; ‘by the way’ *’alaa fikrat-in* على فكرة). They may occur in conjunction with verbs to convey a particular meaning (e.g., *raHHab-a bi-* رحب ب ‘to welcome’ or *’abbar-a ’an* عبر عن ‘to express’). Arabic has a number of these verb-preposition idioms, where the preposition used with the verb is essential for expressing a specific meaning.

1.1 Arabic preposition types

Arabic prepositional expressions fall into two groups, the first group being a relatively small number (ten) of “true” prepositions, and the other group being a more extensive collection of locative expressions.

1.2 *Huruuf al-jarr* حروف الجر

According to Arabic grammatical theory, the **non-derived prepositions** are the **true**, fundamental markers of location and direction, and are called *Huruuf al-jarr* حروف الجر, ‘particles of attraction’ because they “attract” a substantive (noun or adjective) in the genitive case or a suffix pronoun. These non-derived prepositions are a limited and invariable set of lexical items.

1.3 *Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan* ظروف مكان وظروف زمان

The **derived prepositions**, on the other hand, usually come from trilateral lexical roots that are also the source of verbs, nouns, and other parts of speech. They are called locative adverbs, or in Arabic *Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan* ظروف مكان وظروف زمان ‘adverbs of place and adverbs of time.’ These words denote location in much the same way as prepositions and in this work they are

referred to as **semi-prepositions**.¹ These semi-prepositions may take different case inflections or, in some cases, nunation.

Each of the two preposition types has particular attributes, but the basic rule that applies to both classes is that **the noun, noun phrase, or adjective object of the preposition is in the genitive case**.² If the object of the preposition or semi-preposition is a personal pronoun, it takes the form of a pronoun suffix.³

Prepositions and semi-prepositions are crucial elements in Arabic syntax, playing fundamental syntactic and semantic roles. However, their usage can be highly idiomatic and may not necessarily correspond to their English equivalents. Therefore, a wide selection of examples is included here.

2 True prepositions (*Huruuf al-jarr* حروف الجر)

This small set of lexical items contains the true Arabic prepositions, words that exist strictly as prepositions. There are only ten of them in Modern Standard Arabic, but they are of great frequency and they each have a wide range of meanings. They are: *bi-* *li-*, *ka-*, *fii*, *min*, *‘an*, *‘ilaa*, *‘alaa*, *Hattaa* and *mundhu*. One of the distinctive features of this word class is that a true Arabic preposition (*Harf al-jarr* حرف الجر) cannot be preceded by another preposition.

Another characteristic is that only this class of prepositions can combine with verbs to create verb-preposition idioms (such as *baHath-a fii* ‘discuss’ and *baHath-a ‘an* ‘search for’).

This set of items can be divided on the basis of orthography into one-letter, two-letter, and three-letter word groups. Examples are provided to illustrate both spatiotemporal and abstract uses. In certain cases, frequent idiomatic uses are noted as well.

2.1 One-letter prepositions: *bi-* بـ; *li-* لـ; and *ka-* كـ

The three members of this group consist of **one consonant plus a short vowel**. This means that they do not exist as independent orthographical items and they need to be prefixed to the noun that follows.

2.1.1 The preposition *bi-* ‘at, with, in, by; by means of’

The preposition *bi-* designates contiguity in its broadest sense. It has a wide range of uses including spatiotemporal, instrumental, and manner adverbial.

¹ In his excellent short reference work *Grammaire de l'arabe d'aujourd'hui*, D. E. Kouloughli refers to this group of words as “quasi-prépositions” (1994, 152), which is also an appropriate label. Abboud et al. 1997, 67–68 refer to these words as “noun-prepositions.”

² For an in-depth semantic and syntactic analysis of Arabic prepositions see Ryding-Lentzner 1977.

³ When the object of the preposition is an invariable or non-inflected word, such as certain demonstrative pronouns or adverbs (e.g., *dhaalika* ‘that’ or *hunaa* ‘here’), it remains invariable, e.g. *min hunaa* ‘from here,’ or *ba‘d-a dhaalika* ‘after that.’

2.1.1.1 SPATIOTEMPORAL LOCATION

- (1)
- Space:**
- The use of
- bi-*
- as a spatial locative ('in, at, on')

بشارع البركة

bi-shaari^c-i l-barakat-i
on Baraka Street

بالشمال الإفريقيّ

bi-l-shimaal-i l-ʔifriiqiyy-i
in North Africa ('the African
north')

الأستاذ بجامعة القاهرة

al-ʔustaadh-u bi-jaami^cat-i l-qaahirat-i
the professor at the University of Cairo

بجدران المنازل البيضاء

bi-judraan-i l-manaazil-i l-bayDaa^ʔ-i
on the white walls of the houses

- (2)
- Personal locative:**
- Used in this sense,
- bi-*
- may be prefixed to a noun that denotes a state of being and attributes a condition to or describes the condition of a person, or it may be prefixed to a noun that denotes an attribute or temporary state.

كلّ عامّ وأنتم بخير.

kull-a ʔaam-in wa-ʔantum
bi-xayr-in.

Many happy returns.

('May you be in wellness every year.')

رجال بالملابس التقليدية

rijaal-un bi-l-malaabis-i
*l-taqliidiyy-i*men with (wearing) traditional
clothes

- (3)
- Time:**
- An occasion or location in time can be marked with
- bi-*
- :

كان ذاك بالأمس.

kaan-a dhaaka bi-l-ʔams-i.
That was yesterday.

بمناسبة تعيين الشيخ وزيراً للدفاع

bi-munaasabat-i taʔyiin-i l-shaykh-i waziir-an li-l-difaa^c-i
on the occasion of the appointment of the sheikh as minister of defense

بذكرى مرور ثمانى مئة سنة على وفاة صلاح الدين

bi-dhikraa muruur-i thamaanii miʔat-i sanat-in ʔalaa wafaat-i SalaaH-i l-diin-i
on the 800th anniversary of the death of Salah al-Din

2.1.1.2 INSTRUMENTAL *bi-* (باء الآلة; *baaʔ al-ʔaala*; بقاء الاستعانة *baaʔ al-istiʔaana*): The preposition *bi-* is used to refer to an instrument (tool, material, body part) with which an action is accomplished. The instrument can be defined as "an object that plays a role in bringing a process about, but which is not the motivating force, the cause or the instigator" (Chafe 1970, 152).

لا يستطيعون الذهاب بسياراتهم.

laa ya-staTii^c-uuna l-dhahaab-a

bi-sayyaaraat-i-him.

They cannot go **in** ('by means of')
their cars.

دخلا البلد بالباخرة.

daxal-aa l-balad-a bi-l-baaxirat-i.

The two of them entered the country
by ship.

بدأت بسؤال.

bada^o-tu bi-su^oaal-in.

I began **with** ('by means of')
a question.

شد الباب بكلتا يديه.

shadd-a l-baab-a bi-kiltaa yad-ay-hi.

He pulled the door **with** both
his hands.

- (1) **bi- for substance:** A related use, but not instrumental as such, is *bi-* meaning 'with' in the sense of what constitutes the nature of a filling, a substance or an accompaniment.

أرض مليئة بالأشواك

^oarD-un malii^oat-un bi-l-^oashwaak-i

ground filled **with** thorns

المكان المليء بالتاريخ

al-makaan-u l-malii^o-u bi-l-taariix-i

the place filled **with** history

لم يكَلِّ بالنجاح.

lam yu-kallal bi-l-najaaH-i.

It was not crowned **with** success.

شاي مثلج بالنعناع

shaay-un muthallaj-un bi-l-na^cnaa^c-i

iced tea **with** mint

2.1.1.3 ABSTRACT/FIGURATIVE USE: The preposition *bi-* has a wide range of abstract/figurative uses.

بشكل أو بآخر

bi-shakl-in ^oaw bi-^oaaxar-a

[in] one way or another

بسبب الغموض

bi-sabab-i l-ghumuuD-i

because of /on account of the mystery

بالأسلوب نفسه

bi-l-^ousluub-i nafs-i-hi

in the same way

بهدف حلّ كل المشاكل

bi-hadaf-i Hall-i kull-i l-mashaakil-i

with the aim of solving all the problems

بسعر مفتوح

bi-si^cr-in maftuuH-in

at an open price

بأرخص الأثمان

bi-^oarxaS-i l-^oathmaan-i

at the cheapest prices

بأحرّ التعازي

bi-^oaHarr-i l-ta^caazii

with warmest condolences

قرروا مصير بلادهم بأنفسهم.

qarrar-uu maSiir-a bilaad-i-him bi-^oanfus-i-him.

They decided the fate of their country **by** themselves.

2.1.1.4 MANNER ADVERBIAL: The preposition *bi-* can be used with a noun to modify a verb phrase by describing the manner in which an action took place.

When used in this way, the *bi-* phrase answers the question “how?” and the object of the preposition is usually an abstract noun.⁴

تَنَمُّوا ببطء.	أَنْ يَدَافِعَ عَنِ الْمَوْقِفِ بِشِدَّةٍ مُضَاعَفَةً
<i>ta-nmuu bi-buṭʿ-in.</i>	<i>ʿan yu-daafi-a ʿan-i l-mawqif-i bi-shiddat-in muDaaʿafat-in</i>
They grow slowly	to defend the position with redoubled intensity
(‘with slowness’).	

When indicating manner, *bi-* is sometimes prefixed to a noun such as *Suura* ‘manner,’ *Tariiq* ‘way,’ or *shakl* ‘form’ followed by a modifier that provides the exact description of the manner:

بصورة مستمرة	بصورة مخيفة
<i>bi-Suurat-in mustamirrat-in</i>	<i>bi-Suurat-in muxayyifat-in</i>
continuously	frighteningly
بطرق غير قانونية	بهذا الشكل الواسع
<i>bi-Turuq-in ghayr-i qaanuuniyyat-in</i>	<i>bi-haadhaa l-shakl-i l-waasi-i</i>
in illegal ways	in this extensive way

2.1.1.5 *bi-* AS PREFIX FOR THE PREDICATE OF A NEGATIVE COPULA (*al-xabar al-manfiyy* (الخير المنفي): A negative verb of being such as *lays-a* ‘is not’ or *lam ya-kun* ‘was not’ may be followed by *bi-* as part of the predicate. This is especially the case when the predicate involves the use of a demonstrative pronoun:

لكنَّ أحداً منها لم يكن بهذه الأهمية.

laakinna ʿaHad-an min-haa lam ya-kun bi-haadhihi l-ʿahammiyyat-i.

But none of them was of this importance.

ليس في كل الأحيان بهذا السوء.

lays-a fii kull-i l-ʿaHyaan-i bi-haadhaa l-Suuʿ-i.

It isn’t this bad all the time.

2.1.1.6 *bi-* ‘PER; [FOR] EVERY’: The concept of ‘per’ meaning ‘for every’ may be expressed with *bi-*:

سبعة أيام بالأسبوع	مئة بالمئة
<i>sabʿat-a ʿayyaam-in bi-l-ʿusbuuʿ-i</i>	<i>miʿat-u bi-l-miʿat-i</i>
seven days a week	a hundred percent

تبدأ من أربعة سنتات بالدقيقة.

ta-bdaʿ-u min ʿarbaʿat-i sintaat-i bi-l-daqqiqat-i

It starts at four cents a minute.

⁴ For more on this topic see Chapter 11 on adverbs and adverbial expressions.

2.1.2 The preposition *li-* 'to; belonging to; for; for the purpose of'

The preposition *li-* is used to express purpose, direction toward (destination), possession, the indirect object or dative concept of 'to,' and the benefactive concept of 'for' or 'on behalf of.'

There are two spelling rules to observe with *li-*.

- (1) When attached to a noun with the definite article, the *ʾalif* of the definite article is deleted and the *laam* of *li-* attaches directly to the *laam* of the definite article (e.g., *li-l-jaamiʿat-i* للجامعة).
- (2) When *li-* is followed by a pronoun suffix, it changes its short vowel to *fatHa* and becomes *la-* (*la-ka* لَكَ, *la-ki* لَكِ, *la-hu* لَهُ, *la-haa* لَهَا, *la-kumaa* لَكُمَا, *la-humaa* لَهُمَا, *la-naa* لَنَا, *la-kum* لَكُمْ, *la-kunna* لَكُنَّ, *la-hum* لَهُمْ, *la-hunna* لَهُنَّ) except with the first person singular pronoun suffix, *-ii*, which is suffixed directly to the *laam* (*li-ii* لِي 'to me, for me').

2.1.2.1 PURPOSE, CAUSE, REASON, OR MOTIVATION: 'IN ORDER TO, FOR THE PURPOSE OF; DUE TO, BECAUSE OF' (*laam al-taʿlil* لام التعليل): This use of *li-* includes expression of the intention for doing something as well as the reason or motivation for something. "The distinction between intention and reason is made because in English the two are expressed in different terms: the former is introduced by a phrase such as 'in order to' or 'for' whereas the latter is introduced by a phrase such as 'because of.' In Arabic these are both considered to be under the category of *taʿlil*" (Ryding-Lentzner 1977, 132).

- (1) Intention:

لردم الهوة

li-radm-i l-huwwat-i

(in order) to fill the gap

لدعم مرشحيهم المحليين

li-daʿm-i murashshaH-ii-him-i l-maHalliyy-iina

in order to support their local candidates

- (2) Reason:

لأسباب فنية

li-ʾasbaab-in fanniyyat-in

for ('because of') technical reasons

2.1.2.2 POSSESSION (*laam al-milk* لام الملك): MSA does not normally use a verb equivalent to 'have.'⁵ The preposition *li-* is usually used instead to predicate the concept of belonging in both concrete and abstract senses.⁶ If the predication

⁵ To state ownership explicitly, a verb *malak-a/ya-mlik-u* is used to mean 'own' or 'possess,' e.g., *ʾa-mlik-u HiSaana-an raaʾiʿ-an* 'I own/possess a splendid horse.'

⁶ Possession is also expressed by the semi-prepositions *ladaa* and *ʿind-a* (q.v.), although *ʿind-a* is chiefly used in spoken Arabic.

is other than present tense, an accompanying verb of being or becoming carries the tense.

(1) Present tense:

لك طرد في غرفة البريد.

la-ka Tard-un fii ghurfat-i l-bariid-i.

You have a package at the mail room.

للحيوانات لغاتها أيضاً.

li-l-Hayawaanaat-i lughaat-u-haa

ʾayD-an.

Animals have their languages too.

للمنزل حديقة خاصة.

li-l-manzil-i Hadiiqat-un xaaSSat-un.

The house has a private garden.

لا معنى له.

laa maʿanaa la-hu.

It has no meaning.

- (2) Past tense: A past tense form of the verb *kaan-a* or sometimes another verb of being or becoming (*Saar-a*, *baat-a*) is used to convey the past tense of a possessive prepositional construction.

كان لها منزل بديع.

kaan-a la-haa manzil-un

badiiʿ-un.

She had a wonderful house.

لم يكن له أيّ اتصال بهم.

lam ya-kun la-hu ʾayy-u ttiSaal-in bi-him.

He did not have any contact with them.

صار للإسلام في أوروبا تاريخ وجذور.

Saar-a li-l-ʾislaam-i fii ʾuuruubbaa taariix-un wa-judhuur-un.

Islam in Europe has acquired roots and history.

وبات لبعضهنّ شهرة كبيرة.

wa-baat-a li-baʿD-i-hinna shuhtrat-un kabiirat-un.

Some of them (f.) came to have great fame.

2.1.2.3 'FOR': The concept of 'for' can be used in spatial or temporal time extensions. When used with persons it often expresses a benefactive or dative relationship.

نكاد لا نجد نظيراً له.

na-kaad-u laa na-jid-u naZiir-an la-hu.

We can almost not find a counterpart for him.

كانت مخزناً للتوابل.

kaan-at maxzan-an li-l-tawaabil-i.

It was a storehouse for spices.

- (1) Time: When used with time expressions *li-* refers to an extent of time.

لمدة ثماني ساعات

li-muddat-i thamaanii saaʿaat-in

for a period of eight hours

لفترة وجيزة

li-fatrat-in wajiizat-in

for a brief period

للمرة الأولى

li-l-marrat-i l-ʾuulaa

for the first time

2.1.2.4 'TO': With the meaning of 'to,' *li-* may be used with persons or places. When used with places, it conveys much the same directional idea as *'ilaa*;⁷ with persons it may express directionality, proximity, benefactive, or dative relationships.

من اليمين لليساار	في زيارة للبنان تستغرق أسبوعاً
<i>min-a l-yamiin-i li-l-yasaar-i</i>	<i>fii ziyaarat-in li-lubnaan-a ta-staghriq-u 'usbuu'-an</i>
from right to left	on a visit to Lebanon [that] will last a week

مبعوث الاتحاد الأوروبي لعملية السلام في الشرق الأوسط
<i>mab'uuth-u l-ittiHaad-i l-'uurubbiyy-i li-'amaliyyat-i l-salaam-i fii l-sharq-i l-'awsaT-i</i>
the envoy of the European Union to the process of peace in the Middle East

يجلس على المقعد المجاور لها.
ya-jlis-u 'alaa l-maq'ad-i l-mujaawir-i la-haa.
 He is sitting on the seat next to her.

الحمد لله.	هنئاً لك.	ماذا حدث لها؟
<i>al-Hamd-u li-l-laah-i.</i>	<i>hanii'-an la-ka.</i>	<i>maadhaa Hadath-a la-haa?</i>
Praise [be] to God.	Congratulations to you.	What happened to her?

2.1.2.5 'OF': This is a broad category where *li-* is used in cases when an *'iDaafa* construction is avoided because of indefiniteness or definiteness of the noun prior to *li-*. It may not always translate directly into English as 'of,' but it often does.

هو انعكاس للواقع الاجتماعي.	وقال ختماً لحديثه
<i>huwa n'ikaas-un li-l-waaq'-i l-ijtimaa'iiy-i.</i>	<i>wa-qaal-a xatm-an li-Hadiith-i-hi</i>
It is a reflection of social reality.	he said [in] closing [of] his talk

المستشار السياسي لرئيس الجمهورية	قال في كلمة له
<i>al-mustashaar-u l-siyaasiyy-u li-ra'is-i l-jumhuuriyyat-i</i>	<i>qaal-a fii kalimat-in la-hu</i>
the political advisor of the president of the republic	he said in a speech of his

الأمين العام لجامعة الدول العربية
<i>al-'amiin-u l-'aamm-u li-jaami'at-i l-duwal-i l-'arabiyyat-i</i>
the secretary general of the League of Arab States

⁷ William Wright (1967, II: 147–48) considers *li-* to be “etymologically connected with *'ilaa* ('to, toward') and differs from it only in . . . that *'ilaa* mostly expresses concrete relations, local or temporal, whilst *li-* generally indicates abstract or ideal relations . . . Its principal use is to show the passing on of the action to a more distant object and hence it corresponds to the Latin or German dative.”

2.1.3 The preposition *ka-* كَ ‘like, as; such as; in the capacity of’

This preposition is used for comparison and expresses similarity. It also designates capacity or function. It is restricted in occurrence because it is not used with personal (suffix) pronouns; however it can be used with demonstrative pronouns (e.g., *ka-dhaalika* كذلك ‘like that, thus; likewise.’).

2.1.3.1 DESIGNATION OF FUNCTION: The use of *ka-* in this sense specifies capacity, status or function, equivalent to ‘as.’

بدا كمُدافع عن الإسلام. <i>badaa ka-mudaafi-in</i> ‘an-i l-ʔislaam-i. He appeared as a defender of Islam.	كمستشار للعاهل الأردنيّ <i>ka-mustashaar-in</i> li-l-ʔaahil-i l-ʔurdunniyy-i as counselor to the Jordanian monarch
تعمل كمتريجة. <i>ta-ʕmal-u ka-mutarjimat-in.</i> She is working as a translator.	كمصدر للطاقة <i>ka-maSadar-in</i> li-l-Taaqat-i as a source of energy
تحدّث عن الاستشراق كبّحث علميّ. <i>taHaddath-a</i> ʕan-i l-istishraaq-i <i>ka-baHth-in</i> ʕilmiyy-in. He spoke of Orientalism as scholarly research.	

2.1.3.2 SIMILARITY: The preposition *ka-* is used to denote likeness or similarity, equivalent to English ‘like.’

الأمريّ ليس كذلك على الإطلاق. <i>al-ʔamr-u lays-a ka-dhaalika</i> ʕalaa l-ʔiTlaaq-i. The situation is not like that at all.	نجم كعمر الشريف <i>najm-un ka-ʕumar-in</i> l-shariif-i a star like Omar Sharif
ثمّ بين العرب أنفسهم كقيسيّين <i>thumm-a bayn-a l-ʕarab-i ʔanfus-i-him ka-qaysiyy-iina</i> then among the Arabs themselves like [the] Qays [tribe]	في بلد كتونس <i>fii balad-in ka-tuunis-a</i> in a country like Tunisia

This preposition does not take pronoun suffixes. If there is a need to use the concept of similarity with a personal pronoun, i.e., “like him,” “like us,” the semi-preposition *mithl-a* is used instead of *ka-*:

ليس هناك فنّانة مثّلها.
lays-a hunaaka fannaanat-un mithl-a-haa.
 There is no artist like her.

2.1.3.3 *ka-maa* AS ADVERBIAL ‘AS’: By suffixing *-maa*, the preposition *ka-* becomes an adverbial expression meaning ‘as’ or ‘likewise, as well.’ It is normally followed directly by a verb.

كما ذكر المتحدث ...

ka-maa dhakar-a l-mutaHaddith-u . . .
likewise, the spokesman mentioned . . .

كما تحبّ

ka-maa tu-Hibb-u
as you like

كما تعرفون

ka-maa ta'rif-uuna
as you (pl.) know

كما فعلوا السنة الماضية

ka-maa fa'al-uu l-sanat-a l-maaDiyat-a
like they did last year

2.2 Two-letter prepositions

Prepositions that consist of two letters include: *fii*, *min* and *'an*.

2.2.1 *fii* في 'in; at; on'

The preposition *fii* is an essential locative preposition in Arabic. It can be used to express location in space (*fii l-jaami'at-i* في الجامعة 'at the university') or in time (*fii l-SabaaH-i* في الصباح 'in the morning'), as well as figuratively. It may translate as 'at,' 'in,' or 'on,' depending on the context.

2.2.1.1 SPATIAL USES OF *fii*:

في مستشفى الملك خالد

fii mustashfaa l-malik-i xaalid-in
at the King Khalid Hospital

في الحرم الجامعيّ

fii l-Haram-i l-jaami'iyy-i
on the campus ('the university grounds')

عشت في الطابق العلويّ.

'ish-tu fii l-Taabaq-i l-'ulwiyy-i.

I lived on the top floor.

جلسوا في مقهى على الرصيد.

jalas-uu fii maqhan 'alaa l-raSiid-i.

They sat in a café on the sidewalk.

في القدس المحتلة

fii l-quds-i l-muHtallat-i
in occupied Jerusalem

في مسرح الشوارع

fii masraH-i l-shawaari-'i
in the street theater

2.2.1.2 TEMPORAL USES: Used in a temporal sense, *fii* can express both punctuality and duration, i.e., points in time and extension over a span of time:

(1) Punctual use of *fii*:

في هذه المناسبة

fii haadhihi l-munaasabat-i
on this occasion

في ختام الفصل الصيفيّ

fii xitaam-i l-faSl-i l-Sayfiyy-i
at the close of the summer season

في الوقت المناسب

fii l-waqt-i l-munaasib-i
at the right time/proper time

في أوّل الأمر

fii 'awwal-i l-'amr-i
at first ('at the first of the matter')

في الساعة الثامنة

fii l-saa'at-i l-thaaminat-i
at eight o'clock

في العاشرة مساء اليوم

fii l-'aashirat-i masaa'a l-yawm-i
at ten o'clock this evening

- (2) **Durative:** The durative meaning of *fii* results from its use with nouns that indicate a span of time. Used in this sense it may be equivalent to English 'during.'

في هذا القرن

fii haadhaa l-qarn-i
in (during) this century

في حرب الخليج

fii Harb-i l-xaliij-i
in (during) the Gulf War

في الأعوام الأخيرة

fii l-'a'waam-i l-'axiirat-i
in (during) recent years

في غضون دقائق

fii ghuDuun-i daqaa'iq-a
[with]in minutes

2.2.1.3 ABSTRACT/FIGURATIVE USES OF *fii*: The locative meaning of *fii* extends to nouns and noun phrases of many types.

في حالة أي شكوى

fii Haalat-i 'aayy-i shakwaa
in case of any complaint

في زيارة لفرنسا

fii ziyaarat-in li-faransaa
on a visit to France

دورهم في نشر الإسلام

dawr-u-hum fii nashr-i l-'islaam-i
their role in spreading Islam

في ضوء الأحداث الأخيرة

fii Daw'-i l-'aHdaath-i l-'axiirat-i
in the light of recent events

في مجال الزراعة

fii majaan-i l-ziraa'at-i
in the field of agriculture

يقضي ليلاليه في الصلاة.

ya-qDii layaalii-hi fii l-Salaat-i.
He spends his nights in prayer.

2.2.1.4 AS A MANNER ADVERBIAL: In this idiomatic use, *fii* is often followed by the words *shakl* or *Suura* 'way, shape, form.'

في شكل أساسي

fii shakl-in 'asaasiyy-in
in a basic way

في صورة فورية

fii Suurat-in fawriyyat-in
immediately

في شكل غريب

fii shakl-in ghariib-in
in a strange way

في أفضل شكل ممكن

fii 'afDal-i shakl-in mumkin-in
in the best way possible

2.2.1.5 MEANING 'PER'

وصلت سرعة الرياح إلى مئة وسبعين كيلومتراً في الساعة.

waSal-at sur^o-at-u l-riyaaH-i 'ilaa mi^o-at-in wa-sab^o-iina kiiluumitr-an **fii l-saa^o-at-i**.

The wind velocity reached 170 kilometers **an hour/per hour**.

بسرعة ستة كيلومترات في الثانية

bi-sur^o-at-i sittat-i kiiluumitraat-in **fii l-thaaniyat-i**

at the rate of six kilometers **per second**

خمس مرّات في اليوم

xams-a marraat-in **fii l-yawm-i**

five times a **day/per day**

2.2.1.6 SPECIAL FORMS OF PRONOUN SUFFIXES: Because of its long vowel ending, *fii* has special forms for the pronoun suffixes *-ii* 'me,' *-hu* 'him,' *-humaa* 'them [two],' *-hum*, and *-hunna* 'them.' The *-ii* suffix merges with the *-ii* of *fii* and changes to *-iyya*; the vowel-shift suffixes, because they come after an *-ii* sound, change their *-u* vowel to *-i*.⁸

<i>fii</i> + pronoun suffixes			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person:	فِيَّ <i>fii-yya</i>		فِينَا <i>fii-naa</i>
Second person: Masculine	فِيكَ <i>fii-ka</i>	فِيكُمَا <i>fii-kumaa</i>	فِيكُم <i>fii-kum</i>
Feminine	فِيكِ <i>fii-ki</i>		فِيكُنَّ <i>fii-kunna</i>
Third person: Masculine	فِيهِ <i>fii-hi</i>	فِيهِمَا <i>fii-himaa</i>	فِيهِمْ <i>fii-him</i>
Feminine	فِيهَا <i>fii-haa</i>		فِيهِنَّ <i>fii-hinna</i>

لا ريب فيه.

laa rayb-a fii-hi.

There's no doubt about it ('in it').

⁸ The vowel-shift suffixes are the personal pronoun suffixes of the third person that normally have *Damma* after *haa^o*: *-hu*, *-humaa*, *-hum*, and *-hunna*. This *Damma* shifts to *kasra* when preceded by a front vowel or fronted semivowel (*-i* or *-ii* or sometimes *yaa^o*). See also chapter 12, 2.1.1.

2.2.2 The preposition *min* من 'of; from; than'

The preposition *min* indicates direction away from, or point of departure when used spatiotemporally. In addition, it is used to denote source, material, or quantity. It also is used in expressions of comparison, with a comparative adjective where English would use the word "than." It can be used in figurative or abstract ways as well as concrete spatiotemporal ways. Because it ends with a *sukuun*, it sometimes needs a helping vowel. That vowel is /-a/ before the definite article and otherwise, /-i/.

2.2.2.1 *min* AS 'FROM': Used as a directional preposition, *min* indicates 'from':

من جيرانهم العرب	تتحول من سيء إلى أسوأ.
<i>min jiiraan-i-him-i l-ʿarab-i</i>	<i>ta-taHawwal-u min sayyiʿ-in ʿilaa ʿaswaʿ-a.</i>
from their Arab neighbors	It changes from bad to worse.

2.2.2.2 *min* AS 'OF; ONE OF': The use of *min* is especially common in expressions of quantity, measure, or constituent parts.

قصص من الحمراء	كلها من هذا النوع.
<i>qiSaS-un min-a l-Hamraaʿ-i</i>	<i>kull-u-haa min haadhaa l-nawʿ-i.</i>
stories of the Alhambra	They are all of this type.
المادة ١٢٥ من القانون	وصفوه بأنه جو من الثقة.
<i>al-maaddat-u 125 min-a l-qaanuun-i</i>	<i>waSaf-uu-hu bi-ʿanna-hu jaww-un min-a</i>
article 125 of the law	<i>l-thiqat-i.</i>
	They described it as an atmosphere of trust.

استنبطت أنواعاً متميزة من الصوف.
istanbaT-at ʿanwaaʿ-an mutamayyizat-an min-a l-Suuf-i.
 She discovered distinctive types of wool.

ما يحتوي هذا المتحف من كنوز
maa ya-Htawii haadhaa l-mutHaf-u min kunuuz-in
 what this museum contains [in terms] of treasures

2.2.2.3 *min* AS 'AMONG'

ومن هذه الفنون أيضاً السيرك
wa-min haadhihi l-funuun-i ʿayD-an-i l-siirk-u
 and among these arts [is] also the circus

2.2.2.4 *min* AS 'THROUGH'

دخل من الشباك.
daxal-a min-a l-shubbaak-i.
 He came through the window.

2.2.2.5 *min* AS ‘THAN’: With comparative expressions, *min* is used as the equivalent of English ‘than.’ For more examples, see Chapter 10 on comparative adjectives.

يمضون وقتاً أكثر من المتوقع.

ya-mD-uuna waqt-an ʔakthar-a min-a l-mutawaqqaʕ-i.

They are spending more time **than** expected.

أصدرت أكثر من خمس مئة دراسة علمية.

ʔaSdar-at ʔakthar-a min xams-i miʔat-i diraasat-in ʕilmiyyat-in.

It has published more **than** 500 scientific studies.

2.2.2.6 THE USE OF *min* WITH LOCATIVE ADVERBS: When *min* occurs before a locative adverb (or semi-preposition), it usually changes the inflectional vowel of the adverb to *kasra* if the adverb is followed by a noun or pronoun suffix.

من أمامهم

min ʔamaam-i-him

from **in front of** them

من دون تأخير

min duun-i taʔxiir-in

without delay

نجدها من خلال شروحه.

na-jid-u-haa min xilaal-i shuruuH-i-hi.

We find it **through** his commentaries.

- (1) ***min qabl-u*:** Used with certain adverbs that end in *Damma* (such as *qabl-u*), *min* has no effect on the final inflectional vowel as long as the adverb is not in an *ʔiDaafa* with a following noun.⁹

min qabl-u ‘[ever] before’

min Hayth-u ‘regarding, as to’

2.2.2.7 PLEONASTIC OR “DUMMY” *min*: As a way of introducing a sentence, *min* may be used with a descriptive term such as a participle or adjective expressing an introductory observation, just as in English some sentences start with “It is.” This is a way to avoid mentioning the source of a judgment or evaluation and is especially common usage in media Arabic, where observations may need to be general or unattributed.

... من المتوقع أن ...

min-a l-mutawaqqaʕ-i ʔan ...

It is expected that ...

من الطبيعي أن نقوم بزيارة.

min-a l-Tabiiʕiyy-i ʔan na-quum-a bi-ziyaarat-in.

It is **natural** that we undertake a visit.

⁹ See Chapter 11, section 4.1.3, and Chapter 7, section 5.3.1.3.

من المؤكّد أنّ انقضاء عشرين سنة . . .

min-a l-mu'akkad-i 'anna nqiDaa'-a 'ishriina sanat-an . . .

it is certain that the passage of twenty years . . .

من الخطأ أن يبقى هناك استعمار.

min-a l-xaTa'-i 'an ya-bqaa hunaaka sti'maar-un.

It is wrong for imperialism to remain.

2.2.2.8 WITH *qariib* قَرِيب 'NEAR': An idiomatic use of *min* occurs with the adjective *qariib* 'near, close.' English speakers think of "close to" or "near to" when using this adjective, but the correct Arabic preposition to use is *min*.

اسمه كان قريباً جداً من اسمها.

ism-u-hu kaan-a qariib-an jidd-an min-i sm-i-haa.

His name was very close to her name.

2.2.2.9 SOME SPELLING VARIATIONS: When suffixed with the pronoun *-ii* 'me,' the *nuun* in *min* doubles, so that instead of **min-ii*, the phrase 'from me' or 'than me' becomes *minnii* مِنِّي.

When followed by the pronouns *maa* 'what, that, whatever,' or *man* 'whoever,' the *nuun* of *min* is assimilated to the *miim* of *maa*, or *man*¹⁰ and doubles, yielding the contractions *mimmaa* مِمَّا 'of/from that, from what' and *mimman* مِمَّنْ 'of/from whom.'

أقلّ ممّا نحتاج إليه

'aqall-u mimmaa na-Htaaj-u 'ilay-hi

less than [that which] we need

هو أكبر مِنِّي.

huwa 'akbar-u minnii.

He's older than I.

أهمّ كثيراً ممّا سبقه

'ahamm-u kathiir-an mimmaa sabaq-a-hu

much more important than what preceded it

2.2.3 The preposition 'an 'from, away from; about'

Arabic grammars consider 'an to be a true preposition, but its syntactic behavior under certain conditions also allows it to be classified as a noun.¹⁰ Its original meaning, according to Wright (1967, 2:143), was as a noun meaning 'side.'¹¹

¹⁰ E.g., when it serves as the object of the preposition *min* (see below).

¹¹ Its nominal use survives in the expressions such as *min 'an yamiin-i-ka* 'from your right [side].' For discussion of this point see Ryding Lentzner 1977, 94.

This preposition has two distinct meanings, one having to do with ‘distance away from,’ and the other with the concept of ‘concerning’ or ‘about.’ As other prepositions, it can have spatiotemporal and abstract uses, as well as idiomatic ones.

In terms of special spelling rules, the helping vowel used with *‘an* is /-i/. When suffixed to a pronoun starting with *miim* (*maa*, *man*) the *nuun* of *‘an* is assimilated to the *miim*, and doubles: *‘ammaa* عَمَّا, *‘amman* عَمَّن. Likewise, when suffixed with the first person singular personal pronoun *-ii*, the *nuun* doubles: *‘annii* عَنِّي.

2.2.3.1 *‘an* AS ‘ABOUT, REGARDING, OF, CONCERNING’

أصدق تعبير عن الولاء للوطن

‘aSdaq-u ta‘biir-in ‘an-i l-wilaa‘-i li-l-waTan-i

the most sincere expression of devotion to the homeland

في برنامج عن دور الجامعة في الاتصال الثقافي

fii barnaamaj-in ‘an dawr-i l-jaami‘at-i fii l-ittiSaal-i l-thaqaafiyy-i

in a program about the role of the university in cultural contact

فهنالك روايات عدة عما حدث.

fa-hunaaka riwaayaat-un ‘iddat-un ‘ammaa Hadath-a.

There are several stories about what happened.

2.2.3.2 CERTAIN VERBS REQUIRE *‘an*:

الكتاب صدر عن دار العلم.

al-kitaab-u Sadar-a ‘an daar-i l-‘ilm.

The book was published by (‘issued from’) Dar al-‘ilm.

تختلف عن غيرها.

ta-xtalif-u ‘an ghayr-i-haa.

She differs from others.

2.2.3.3 ‘ON THE RIGHT; ON THE LEFT’: With directions, *‘an* is used as English would use ‘on’:

عن يمينه . . . وعن يساره

‘an yamiin-i-hi . . . wa-‘an yasaar-i-hi

on his right . . . and on his left

2.3 Three-letter prepositions: *‘alaa* على, *‘ilaa* إلى, and *Hattaa* حتى

All three of these prepositions end with *‘alif maqSuura*. A particular spelling feature of both *‘alaa* and *‘ilaa* is that the final *‘alif maqSuura* converts to *yaa’* when a pronoun suffix is added to the word. Owing to the shift of the *‘alif* to *yaa’*, the third person pronoun suffixes *-hu*, *-humaa*, *-hum*, and *-hunna* shift their vowel from /-u/ to /-i/ and become *-hi*, *-himaa*, *-him*, and *-hinna*. For a model inflectional chart of *‘alay-* and *‘ilay-* plus pronoun suffixes see Chapter 12 section 2.3.

Note that *Hattaa* does not take pronoun suffixes.

2.3.1 The preposition ‘*alaa* على ‘on, upon’

This preposition designates the concept of ‘on’ or ‘upon’ in general, whether spatio-temporal or figurative. In the abstract sense, it conveys also a sense of “incumbent upon.”

2.3.1.1 ‘*alaa* ‘ON; UPON’

(1) Spatial meaning:

عثر على هيكل عظمي.
‘*athar-a* ‘*alaa haykal-in* ‘*aZmiyy-in*.
He stumbled upon a skeleton.

الرجال على ظهور الخيل
al-rijaal-u ‘*alaa Zuhuur-i l-xayl-i*
the men on horseback

على اليابسة
‘*alaa l-yaabisat-i*
on dry land

على الشاشة
‘*alaa l-shaashat-i*
on the screen

(2) Temporal meaning: Used with a word denoting extent of time, ‘*alaa* has a durative sense and may indicate passage of time from a particular point in the past. This can be expressed in English in various ways.

على مدار العام
‘*alaa madaar-i l-‘aam-i*
all year round (‘on the circuit of the year’)

على مدى يومين
‘*alaa madaa yawm-ayni*
for (‘during’) two days

بعد ثلاثة أيام على وقوع الزلزال
ba‘d-a thalaathat-i ‘ayyaam-in ‘*alaa wuquu‘-i l-zilzaal*
after three days since the [happening of the] earthquake

2.3.1.2 FIGURATIVE MEANING: Used figuratively, ‘*alaa* can denote a range of meanings, some a direct reflection of the spatiotemporal concepts; others more abstract. Among those abstract meanings are the sense of ‘according to; as for’ and ‘incumbent upon.’

على أساس غير عنصري
‘*alaa ‘asaas-in ghayr-i ‘unSuriyy-in*
on a non-racist basis

على ما أظن
‘*alaa maa ‘a-Zunn-u* . . .
in my opinion; as for what
I think

السلام عليكم. وعليكم السلام.
al-salaam-u ‘alay-kum. wa ‘alay-kum-u l-salaam-u.
Peace be upon you (pl.). And upon you (pl.) peace.

(1) ‘up to; incumbent upon; must; have to’: Used in this sense, ‘*alaa* denotes a required or expected action. It is therefore followed either by the particle ‘*an* plus a subjunctive verb, or by a verbal noun.

علينا أن نفهم معنى الرياضة.

‘alay-naa ‘an na-fham-a ma‘naa l-riyaaDat-i.

We have to understand the meaning of sport.

علينا أن نبدأ من الصفر.

‘alay-naa ‘an na-bda‘-a min-a l-Sifr-i

We have to begin from zero.

وعلى الدولة أن تقوم بدورها.

wa-‘alaa l-dawlat-i ‘an ta-quum-a bi-dawr-i-haa.

It is up to the state to undertake its role.

عليه أن يأتي إلى هنا.

‘alay-hi ‘an ya-‘tiy-a ‘ilaa hunaa.

He has to come here.

2.3.2 The preposition *‘ilaa* إلى ‘to, towards’

The general meaning of *‘ilaa* is directional towards an object. It is used spatiotemporally and also in abstract and figurative ways. When used in abstract senses it often has the sense of ‘addition to.’

Because its final letter is *‘alif maqSuura*, like *‘alaa*, its *‘alif* converts to *yaa’* when pronoun suffixes are added (see Chapter 12, section 2.3).

من هناك إلى اسطنبول

min hunaa‘a ‘ilaa isTanbuul-a

from there to Istanbul

إلى مسافة عشرة أمتار

‘ilaa masaafat-i ‘asharat-i ‘amtaar-in

to a distance of ten meters

إلى اليمين

‘ilaa l-yamiin-i

to the right

إلى أين؟

‘ilaa ‘ayna?

Where to?

2.3.2.1 VERBS OF MOTION PLUS *‘ilaa*: Note that with many verbs of motion, it is necessary to use *‘ilaa* with the point of destination.

عندما جئنا إلى هنا

‘inda-maa ji‘naa ‘ilaa hunaa

when we came (‘to’) here

جئت إلى هنا لأنني واثق من قدرتي.

ji‘tu ‘ilaa hunaa li‘anna-nii waathiq-un min qudrat-ii.

I came (‘to’) here because I am confident in my ability.

2.3.2.2 ABSTRACT/FIGURATIVE MEANINGS OF *‘ilaa*:

انتهت إلى فشل ذريع.

intahat ‘ilaa fashl-in dharii‘-in.

It ended in a devastating failure.

يترجم إلى لغته.

yu-tarjim-u ‘ilaa lughat-i-hi.

He translates into his language.

وما إلى ذلك

wa-maa ‘ilaa dhaalika

and so forth

من الألف إلى الياء

min-a l-‘alif-i ‘ilaa l-yaa‘-i

from beginning to end

(‘from the *‘alif* to the *yaa’*)

2.3.3 The preposition *Hattaa* حَتَّى 'until, up to'

Hattaa, although it ends with ^ʔ*alif maqSuura* like ^ʔ*ilaa* and ^ʔ*alaa*, does not take personal pronoun objects (suffix pronouns) and therefore it does not change its shape or spelling. Its meaning as a preposition is closely related to that of ^ʔ*ilaa* 'to, towards' except that it designates direction in time rather than in space.

It is important to note that *Hattaa* has at least two other functions in Arabic syntax other than as a preposition meaning 'up to' or 'until'; it also is an adverb or preposition with the meaning of 'even' and a conjunctive particle used with verbs meaning 'in order to.'

حَتَّى غروب الشمس

Hattaa ghuruub-i l-shams-i
until sunset

حَتَّى فجر أمس

Hattaa fajr-i ʔams-i
until dawn yesterday

حَتَّى مساء غد

Hattaa masaaʔ-i ghad-in
until tomorrow evening

حَتَّى السبعينات من القرن العشرين

Hattaa l-sabʕiinaat-i min-a l-qarn-i l-ʕishriina
up to the seventies of the twentieth century

حَتَّى فتحها على يد المسلمين

Hattaa fatH-i-haa ʕalaa yad-i l-muslim-iina
until it was conquered ('its conquering') by the Muslims

حَتَّى العشرين من عمره

Hattaa l-ʕishriina min ʕumr-i-hi
until he was twenty years old ('until the twentieth [year] of his age')

2.3.4 The preposition *mundhu* مِنْذُ 'since; ago; for'

This preposition has the meaning of distance or extent in time and can be translated in several ways, depending on context. Like *Hattaa* and *ka-* it does not take personal pronoun objects.

2.3.4.1 *mundhu* AS 'FOR; IN': Used to mean 'for' or 'in,' it denotes a time span during which something goes on. Its object is usually a noun phrase that refers to a span of time:

منذ خمس سنوات متواصلة

mundhu xams-i sanawaat-in mutawaaSilat-an
for five continuous years

منذ ربع قرن

mundhu rubʕ-i qarn-in
for a quarter century

يعمل منذ شهرين كترجم.

ya-ʕmal-u mundhu shahr-ayni ka-mutarjim-in.

He has been working for two months as a translator.

2.3.4.2 *mundhu* AS 'SINCE; FROM': When *mundhu* means 'since,' it specifies a particular point of time in the past where the action began. It can also mean 'from' when the beginning of a time period is denoted and an end specified (often used with *Hattaa* 'until, up to').

كانت مخزّنة في صناديق منذ الحرب.

kaan-at muxazzanat-an fii Sanaadiiq-a mundhu l-Harb-i.

They had been stored in boxes **since the war.**

منذ الستّينات صارت تأخذ دوراً أكبر.

mundhu l-sittiinaat-i Saar-at ta-'xudh-u dawr-an 'akbar-a.

Since the sixties she has assumed a larger role.

منذ مطلع السبعينات

mundhu maTla^c-i l-sab^ciinaat-i

since the beginning of the seventies

كانوا مصطفّين منذ الصباح الباكر.

kaan-uu muSTaff-iina mundhu l-SabaaH-i l-baakir-i.

They had been lined up **since early morning.**

2.3.4.3 'AGO': In the sense of 'ago,' *mundhu* specifies a time in the past measured from the present time:

قال منذ أكثر من قرن من الزمان

qaal-a mundhu 'akthar-a min qarn-in min-a l-zamaan-i

he said **more than a century ('of time') ago**

كان قد بعث إليه منذ ثلاثة أسابيع برسالة.

kaan-a qad ba'ath-a 'ilay-hi mundhu thalaathat-i 'asaabii^c-a bi-risaalat-in.

He had sent him a letter **three weeks ago.**

تقديراً لجهوده ... منذ أكثر من أربعين سنة

taqdiir-an li-juhuud-i-hi ... mundhu 'akthar-a min 'arba^ciina sanat-in

in appreciation of his efforts ... **more than forty years ago**

2.3.4.4 PRESENT PERFECT MEANING WITH *mundhu*: An action started in the past and continuing into the present is usually rendered by the present tense in Arabic, whereas in English, the present perfect is used. The preposition *mundhu* is used to specify at which point in the past the action started. This structure may occur with verbal predications or with equational predications.

يعمل في الإدارة منذ شهرين.

ya-'mal-u fii l-'idaarat-i mundhu shahr-ayni.

He **has been working** in the administration **for two months.**

أعيش هنا منذ خمس سنوات.

^{ʾa}ʿiish-u hunaa mundhu xams-i sanawaat-in.

I have been living here for five years.

أهوى الغناء منذ طفولتي.

^{ʾa}-hwaa l-ghinaa^{ʾa} mundhu Tufuulat-ii.

I have loved singing since my childhood.

2.4 Summary of true Arabic prepositions (Huruuf al-jarr حروف الجرّ)

One-letter prepositions:

bi-	بـ	li-	لـ	ka-	كـ
-----	----	-----	----	-----	----

Two-letter prepositions:

fii	في	min	من	ʿan	عن
-----	----	-----	----	-----	----

Three-letter prepositions:

^{ʾilaa}	إلى	^{ʿalaa}	على	Hattaa	حتىّ	mundhu	منذ
------------------	-----	------------------	-----	--------	------	--------	-----

3 Locative adverbs or semi-prepositions (Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan ظروف مكان وظروف زمان)

These words function in many ways as prepositions but are not “true” prepositions because

- (1) they are derived from triliteral lexical roots and
- (2) they can be preceded by a true preposition or even another semi-preposition.

Usually they show accusative case marking with *fatHa*, to indicate their adverbial function. Under certain circumstances, that case marker can change.¹² Like true prepositions, they are normally followed by a noun in the genitive case or a pronoun suffix.

Semi-prepositions or locative adverbs are used in concrete and figurative ways, but they do not have the extensive range of abstract meanings that true prepositions have, nor are they normally used in verb-preposition idioms. Included here are examples of some of the most common ones.

3.1 ^{ʾamaam}-a أمام ‘in front of; facing; in the face of; before; to’

The word ^{ʾamaam}-a refers to a position ‘in front’ or ‘before,’ both spatially and figuratively:

¹² The fact that the case marker may change is considered an indicator of their close relationship to nouns.

أمامنا الكثير من الفرص والكثير من التحديات.

ʔamaam-a-naa l-kathiir-u min-a l-furaS-i wa-l-kathiir-u min-a l-taHaddiyyaat-i.

Before us are many opportunities and many challenges.

أمامي الطبيعة الرائعة.

ʔamaam-ii l-Tabiiʕat-u l-raaʕiʕat-u.

Before me is splendid nature.

هو مسؤول أمام المجلس.

huwa masʕuul-un ʔamaam-a l-majlis-i.

He is responsible to ('before') the council.

3.1.1 *ʔamaam-a* as 'against' or 'versus'

Idiomatically, *ʔamaam-a* is used in the context of sports teams to express the team 'against' which another team is playing.

يلعبون مباراة أخرى أمام منتخب الصين.

ya-lʕab-uuna mubaaraat-an ʔuxraa ʔamaam-a muntaxab-i l-Siin-i.

They play another match against the Chinese team.

كسبوا أولى مبارياتهم أمام سوريا.

kasab-uu ʔuulaa mubaarayaat-i-him ʔamaam-a suuriyaa.

They won the first of their matches against Syria.

3.1.2 *ʔamaam* as forward position

Sometimes, *ʔamaam* is used as a noun referring to a forward position. When used this way it inflects for all three cases.

يمثل خطوة كبرى إلى الأمام.

yu-maththil-u xuTwat-an kubraa ʔilaa l-ʔamaam-i.

It represents a great step forward.

من أمامهم

min ʔamaam-i-him

from in front of them

3.2 *ʔathnaaʔ-a* أثناء and *fii ʔathnaaʔ-i* في أثناء 'during'

The noun *ʔathnaaʔ* may be used in the accusative case to indicate 'during' or after the preposition *fii* (in the genitive case), with the same meaning.

أثناء إحدى جلسات المناقشات

ʔathnaaʔ-a ʔiHdaa jalasaat-i l-munaaqashaat-i

during one of the sessions of the debates

في أثناء أزمة الخليج

fii ʔathnaaʔ-i ʔazmat-i l-xaliij-i

during the Gulf Crisis

3.3 *bayn-a* بين 'between; among'

3.3.1 Repetition of *bayn-a* with pronoun

The semi-preposition *bayn-a* means 'between' two objects and also 'among' many objects. It has the peculiarity that when one or both of the objects are pronouns, *bayn-a* must be repeated.

بينى وبينك

bayn-ii wa-bayn-a-ka

between me and (between) you

بينه وبينها

bayn-a-hu wa-bayn-a-haa

between him and (between) her

الخلاف بينهم وبين جزء من الجيش.

al-xilaaf-u bayn-a-hum wa-bayn-a juz'-in min-a l-jaysh-i.

The dispute is between them and (between) a portion of the army.

3.3.2 *bayn-a* plus nouns

If both of the objects of the preposition are nouns, *bayn-a* is used only once and the second noun is conjoined to the first with the conjunction *wa-* 'and.' Both nouns are considered objects of the semi-preposition and both are in the genitive case. A dual noun or a plural noun may also follow *bayn-a*.

بين البلدين

bayn-a l-balad-ayni

between the two countries

ضاع بين الزحام.

Daa'-a bayn-a l-ziHaam-i.

He got lost in (among) the crowd.

بين البنك الدولي وصندوق النقد الدولي

bayn-a l-bank-i l-duwaliyy-i wa-Sanduq-i l-naqd-i l-duwaliyy-i

between the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund

بين الوفد الفلسطيني والوفد الإسرائيلي

bayn-a l-wafd-i l-filisTiiniyy-i wa-l-wafd-i l-'israa'iiliyy-i

between the Palestinian delegation and the Israeli delegation

تبادل الآراء بين الزعماء العرب

tabaadul-u l-'aaraa'-i bayn-a l-zu'amaa'-i l-'arab-i

exchange of views among the Arab leaders

أفضل وسيلة لإيجاد سبل التفاهم بين الأمم

'afDal-u wasiilat-in li-'iijaad-i subul-i l-tafaahum-i bayna l-'umam-i

the best method to create ways of understanding among nations

3.3.3 *bayn-a* after *min*

After the preposition *min*, *bayn-a* becomes *bayn-i*, as object of the preposition:

ومن بينهم النائب اللبناني

wa-min bayn-i-him-i l-naa'ib-u l-lubnaaniyy-u

and among them [is] the Lebanese representative

3.4 *ba'd-a* بعد 'after; in'

This function word is used as a semi-preposition and also as an adverb. As a semi-preposition, it has a *fatHa* (accusative case ending) and takes a noun or pronoun

object. In some cases it might be preceded by a true preposition (usually *min* or *'ilaa*), and its case marker then changes to genitive (final *kasra*). It still is followed by a noun or pronoun in the genitive case.

3.4.1 Locative *ba'd-a*

The locative use of *ba'd-a* includes both time and place.

بعد أربعة قرون
ba'd-a 'arba'at-i quruun-in
after four centuries

بعد ولادة ابنهما
ba'd-a wilaadat-i bn-i-himaa
after the birth of their son

ماذا حدث له بعد ذلك؟
maadhaa Hadath-a la-hu ba'd-a dhaalika?
What happened to him after that?

بعد توقيع العقد
ba'd-a tawqii'-i l-'aqd-i
after signing the contract

3.4.2 *ba'd* after a preposition

Preceded by a true preposition, *ba'd* inflects in the genitive:

أكلات خفيفة لبعء منتصف الليل
'akalaat-un xafiifat-un li-ba'd-i muntaSaf-i l-layl-i
light food for after midnight

في بعء الظهر
fii ba'd-i l-Zuhr-i
in the afternoon

3.4.3 *ba'd-u* بعء

If there is no noun or pronoun following *ba'd*, it is considered an adverb. In this case, devoid of a noun or pronoun object, *ba'd* changes its final vowel to *Damma*.¹³ In this adverbial role, the final *Damma* is invariable. The expression *ba'd-u* is used chiefly as an adverbial of time in negative clauses, meaning '[not] yet.'

لم يحدد مواعده بعء.
lam yu-Haddad maw'id-u-hu ba'd-u.
Its date has not yet been set.

3.4.3.1 THE EXPRESSION *fii-maa ba'd-u* فيما بعء 'LATER'

اعملها فيما بعء.
i-'mal-haa fii-maa ba'd-u.
Do it later.

سأتلفن لك فيما بعء.
sa-'u-talfin-u la-ka fii-maa ba'd-u.
I will telephone you later.

¹³ The final *Damma* on *ba'd-u* and on certain other semi-prepositions (*qabl-u*, *taHt-u*) is considered to be a remnant of an old locative case. This *Damma* has two characteristics: (1) it is invariable, even after a preposition (e.g., *min qabl-u*; *min taHt-u*); (2) it cannot be on the first term of an *'iDaafa*, that is, it cannot be followed by a noun in the genitive case or by a pronoun suffix. See Chapter 11, section 4.1.3, especially note 12.

3.5 *daaxil-a* داخل 'inside, within'

The semi-preposition *daaxil-a* refers to a location inside or on the interior of something:

داخل الدولة الإسلامية
daaxil-a l-dawlat-i l-'islaamiyyat-i
 inside the Islamic state

لينغلقوا داخل الحدود
li-ya-nghaliq-uu daaxil-a l-Huduud-i
 to be locked inside the borders

3.5.1 After a true preposition

After a true preposition, *daaxil-* inflects for the genitive case.

في داخل الاسفنج
fii daaxil-i l-isfanj-i
 on the inside of the sponge

3.6 *Didd-a* ضِدَّ 'against; versus'

يشن حرباً ضِدَّ الدولة التركية.
ya-shunn-u Harb-an Didd-a l-dawlat-i
l-turkiyyat-i.

He is launching a war
 against the Turkish state.

كلُّ شيءٍ ضِدي.
kull-u shay'²-in Didd-ii.
 Everything is against me.

3.7 *Dimn-a* ضَمَنَ 'within; inside; among'

ضمن قوَّات الأمم المتحدة
Dimn-a quwwaat-i l-'umam-i l-muttaHidat-i
 within the powers of the United Nations

أراضٍ كان يجب أن تكون ضمن حصَّتهم
²araaD-in kaan-a ya-jib-u an ta-kuun-a Dimn-a HiSSat-i-him
 lands [which] should have been [included] within their portion

3.8 *duun-a* دُونَ; *min duun-i* مِنْ دُونَ; *bi-duun-i* بِدُونَ 'without'

The word *duun* by itself literally means 'below, under' and it can be used by itself marked with a *fatHa* as a semi-preposition meaning 'without.' However, it often occurs in combination with *min* or *bi-* as a compound prepositional phrase meaning 'without.'

3.8.1 *duun-a*

استخدام بعضها دون بعضها الآخر
istixdaam-u ba°D-i-haa duun-a ba°D-i-haa l-²aaxar-i
 using some of them without the others

3.8.2 *min duun-i*

السلام غير ممكن من دون هذا البلد.
al-salaam-u ghayr-u mumkin-in min duun-i haadha l-balad-i.
 Peace is not possible **without this country**.

من دون فرض رسم دخول
min duun-i farD-i rasm-i duxuul-in
without imposing an entrance fee

3.8.3 *bi-duun-i*

قهوة بدون كافيين
qahwat-un bi-duun-i kaafiin
 decaffeinated coffee ('**without**
caffeine)

يبقى تعليمها بدون هدف.
ya-bqaa ta'liim-u-haa bi-duun-i hadaf-in.
 Teaching it remains aimless
 ('**without a goal**').

3.9 *fawq-a* 'فوق' 'above; upon; on top of; over'

يسير على عجلات فوقها.
ya-siir-u 'alaa 'ajalaat-in fawq-a-hu.
 It goes along on wheels [which are]
above it.

ما فوقه وما تحته
maa fawq-a-hu wa-maa taHt-a-hu
 what is **above** it and **below** it

على الأرض وفوقها
'alaa l-'arD-i wa-fawq-a-haa
 on the earth and **over it**

فوق سطح منزله
fawq-a saTH-i manzal-i-hi
 on [top of] **the roof** of his house

3.10 *fawr-a* 'فور' 'immediately upon; immediately after; right after'

نُقل إلى مستشفى الجامعة فور إصابته.
nuqil-a 'ilaa mustashfaa l-jaami'at-i fawr-a 'iSaabat-i-hi.
 He was transported to the university hospital **right after** being hit.

3.11 *Hasab-a* 'حسب' 'according to; in accordance with'

حسب نص القرار
Hasab-a naSS-i l-qaraar-i
according to the text of the resolution

3.12 *Hawl-a* 'حول' 'about, regarding; around'

This semi-preposition has two distinct meanings, one being 'about' in the concrete physical sense of 'surrounding' or 'around' and the other being 'about' in the sense of 'regarding' or 'with regard to.'

التدخل الأمريكي حول العالم

*al-tadaxxul-u l-ʔamriikiyy-u Hawl-a
l-ʔaalam-i*

American intervention around
the world

حول الوضع في الشرق الأوسط

Hawl-a l-waDʕ-i fii l-sharq-i l-ʔawsaT-i
about the situation in the Middle East

حول مواضيع ذات اهتمام مشترك

Hawl-a l-mawaaDiiʕ-i dhaat-i htimaam-in mushtarak-in
about topics of common concern

3.13 *Hawaalii* حوالي 'approximately'

The word *Hawaalii* is not the typical locative adverb or semi-preposition ending in *fatHa*, yet it serves much the same function, being followed by a noun in the genitive case.

في جلساته حوالي مئة باحث.

fii jalsaat-i-hi Hawaalii miʔat-i baaHith-in.

In its sessions [were] approximately 100 researchers.

3.14 *ʔibbaan-a* إبان 'during'

إبان الشتاء

ʔibbaan-a l-shitaaʔ-i

during the winter

3.15 *ʔithr-a* إثر 'right after; immediately after'

إثر اجتماعهم

ʔithr-a jtimaaʕ-i-him

right after their meeting

3.16 *ʔizaaʔ-a* إزاء 'facing; in the face of'

إزاء القضايا المصرية

izaaʔ-a l-qaDaayaa l-miSriyyat-i

in the face of Egyptian problems

3.17 *ladaa* لدى 'at, by; upon; to; having'

This locative adverb denotes possession and proximity. Like *ʔilaa* and *ʔalaa*, it changes its final *ʔalif maqSuura* to *yaaʔ* when it has a personal pronoun suffix. See model inflectional chart of *ʔalaa* + pronoun suffixes, Chapter 12, section 2.3.

3.17.1 *ladaa* showing possession:

لديهما أشياء مشتركة كثيرة.

laday-himaa ʔashyaaʔ-u mushtarakat-un
kathiiirat-un.

They [two] have many things in common.

لا مستقبل لديّ.

laa mustaqbal-a laday-ya.

I [would] have no future.

ألعاب القوى لديها نجوم بارزون.

ʔalʔaab-u l-qiwaaw *laday-haa* nujuum-un baariz-uuna.

Track and field [sports][they] have prominent stars.

3.17.2 *ladaa* as 'to; at; with'

A particular use of *ladaa* is to denote the country to which an ambassador is designated.

سفير قبرص لدى مصر

safiir-u qubruS-a ladaa miSr-a
the ambassador of Cyprus
to Egypt

سفير اليابان لدى السعودية

safiir-u l-yaabaan ladaa l-saʕuudiyyat-i
the ambassador of Japan to Saudi Arabia

3.17.3 *ladaa* as 'upon; at the time of'

ولدى رفضهم ذلك

wa-ladaa rafD-i-him dhaalika
and upon their refusal of that

لدى عودة السفير إلى تونس

ladaa ʕawdat-i l-safiir-i ʔilaa tuunis-a
upon the return of the ambassador to Tunis

3.18 *maʕ-a* مع 'with'¹⁴

The basic meaning of *maʕ-a* has to do with accompaniment or association and is almost always equivalent to English 'with.' Note that it is not used for indicating instrumental concepts; *bi-* is used for that. It is also possible to use *maʕ-a* to express possession of something concrete that people could "have with" them, such as a wallet or keys. This expression of possession does not indicate permanency or the concept of 'belonging to.'

3.18.1 Accompaniment or association

مع الأقارب والأصدقاء

maʕ-a l-ʔaqaarib-i wa-l-ʔaSdiqaaʔ-i
with relatives and friends

مع أحرّ التمنّيات

maʕ-a ʔaHarr-i l-tamanniyaat-i
with warmest wishes

¹⁴ The word *maʕ-a* may seem like a true preposition because it is a lexical primitive and is sometimes used in verb-preposition expressions (*naaqash-a maʕ-a* 'to discuss with,' *tasaawaa maʕ-a* 'to equate with,' *taʕaawan-a maʕ-a* 'to cooperate with,' *ijtamaʕ-a maʕ-a* 'to meet with'). The eighth-century Arabic grammarian Sibawayhi, however, cites the phrase *dhahab-a min maʕ-i-hi* 'he left him,' showing that *maʕ-a* can sometimes be the object of another preposition. Sibawayhi 1970, I:177.

يريدون التداول مع الأمريكيين.

yu-riid-uuna l-tadaawul-a ma^c-a l-^oamriikiyy-iina.

They want to deliberate **with the Americans**.

فمع الكل نتقدم من أجل الكل.

fa-ma^c-a l-kull-i na-taqaddam-u min ^oajl-i l-kull-i.

With everyone we will progress for the sake of everyone.

عندي مشكلة مع هذا الرجل.

^cind-ii mushkilat-un ma^c-a

haadhaa l-rajul-i.

I have a problem with that man.

مع كل قضايا الشرق الأوسط

ma^c-a kull-i qaDaayaa

l-sharq-i l-^oawsaT-i

with all the problems of
the Middle East

3.18.2 Possession

A sense of immediate possession (on or near a person) is conveyed by *ma^c-a*.

معها الكنز داخل العلبة.

ma^c-a-haa l-kanz-u daaxil-a l-^culbat-i.

She has the treasure inside the box.

معك كبريت؟

ma^c-a-ka kibriit-un?

Do you have matches?

3.18.3 Use of *ma^c-an* معاً as 'together'

To convey the meaning of 'together' *ma^c-a* takes an adverbial indefinite accusative ending *-an*:

العيش معاً في القدس

al-^caysh-u ma^c-an fii l-quds-i

living together in Jerusalem

3.19 *mithl-a* 'like; as'

The semi-preposition *mithl-a* indicates similarity. It is close in meaning to the preposition *ka-* 'like, as.' However, it is more flexible than *ka-* because it can take suffix pronoun objects (see section 2.1.3 above).

مثل أي شعب آخر

mithl-a ^oayy-i sha^cb-in ^oaaxar-a

like any other people

مثل دواء قوي

mithl-a dawaa^o-in qawiyy-in

like a strong medicine

3.19.1 *mithl* + demonstrative + noun 'such as this/these; such a'

An idiomatic use of *mithl* occurs with a demonstrative pronoun, meaning 'such a' or 'such as this/these.'

نجح هذه السنة في توقيع مثل هذا الاتفاق.

najaH-a haadhihi l-sanat-a fii tawqii^c-i mithl-i haadhaa l-ittifaaq-i.

This year he succeeded in signing such an agreement.

لا يستطيع العمل في مثل هذه الأجواء.

laa ya-staTii^c-u l-^camal-a fii mithl-i haadhihi l-^cajwaa^c-i.

He cannot work in such an atmosphere.

مثل هذه الأشياء لها رنينها.

mithl-u haadhihi l-^cashyaa^c-i la-haa raniin-u-haa.

Things such as these have their resonance.

3.20 *naHw-a* نحو 'toward; about; approximately'

This semi-preposition has either a directional meaning of 'toward' or a figurative use of 'approximately, about.'

لتزويده نحو ثلاثين طائرة

li-tazwiid-i-hi naHw-a thalaathiina

Taa^cirat-an

to equip it with about thirty planes

نحو غد أربح

naHw-a ghad-in ^carbaH-a

toward a more profitable tomorrow

3.20.1 *naHw* after a preposition

After a preposition or another semi-preposition, *naHw-* takes the genitive case:

بنحو ثلاثة بلايين دولار

bi-naHw-i thalaathat-i balaayiin-i duulaar-in

by approximately three billion dollars

بعد نحو تسعة قرون

ba^cd-a naHw-i tis^cat-i quruun-in

after about nine centuries

3.21 Words based on the root *q-b-l*

The root *q-b-l*, which denotes anteriority, is used in several forms that signify different degrees or variations on the concept.

3.21.1 *qabl-a* قبل 'before; prior to; ago'

ضبطت قبل أيام.

DubiT-at qabl-a ^cayyaam-in.

It was seized [a few] days ago.

بعد ولادة بنتهما قبل سنة

ba^cd-a wilaadat-i bnat-i-himaa qabl-a sanat-in

after the birth of their daughter a year ago

قبل السباحة إلى البحر

qabl-a l-sibaaHat-i ^cilaa l-baHr-i

before swimming to the sea

الليلة قبل الماضية

al-laylat-a qabl-a l-maaDiyat-i

the night before last

3.21.2 qubayl-a قبيل 'a little before, just before'

This is a diminutive form of *qabl-a* that denotes a short period of time.

قبيل الانتقال إلى مدينة صيدا

qubayl-a l-intiqaal-i ʔilaa

madiinat-i Saydaa

just before moving to Sidon

قبيل العودة إلى الكويت

qubayl-a l-ʿawadat-i ʔilaa l-kuwayt-i

just before returning to Kuwait

3.21.3 qubaalat-a قباله 'opposite; facing'

في مياه المحيط الأطلسي قباله إيرلندا

fii miyaah-i l-muHiit-i l-ʔaTlasiyy-i qubaalat-a ʔiirlandaa

in the waters of the Atlantic Ocean opposite Ireland

3.21.4 muqaabil-a مقابل 'opposite; in exchange for; opposed to'

كسبوا بهدفين مقابل هدف واحد.

kasab-uu bi-hadaf-ayni muqaabil-a hadaf-in waaHid-in.

They won by two goals to one ('as opposed to one').

3.21.5 min qibal-i من قبل 'on the part of; by'

تلاقي إقبالاً من قبل المواطنات.

tulaaqii ʔiqbaal-an min qibal-i

l-muwaaTinaat-i.

It meets with acceptance on the part of
female citizens.

من قبل زملائه في الحزب

min qibal-i zumalaaʔ-i-hi fii l-Hizb-i

on the part of his colleagues

in the party

3.22 Words based on the root q-r-b

The root *q-r-b* denotes proximity and is used chiefly in two forms.

3.22.1 quraabat-a قرابة 'almost; close to'

قرابة ثلاثة عشر مليون دولار

quraabat-a thalaathat-a ʿashar-a milyuun-a duulaar-in

close to thirteen million dollars

3.22.2 qurb-a قرب 'near; close to; in the vicinity of'

في جنوب تركيا قرب الحدود السورية

fii januub-i turkiyaa qurb-a l-Huduud-i l-suuriyya

in southern Turkey near the Syrian border[s]

3.23 *siwaa* سوى 'other than; except'

Used following a negative clause, *siwaa* indicates an exception. This use of *siwaa* after the negative is a common way to phrase restrictive expressions that would normally be expressed in English with 'only.'

لا يرى سوى سبيل واحد.

laa ya-raa siwaa sabiil-in waaHid-in.

He sees **only one way** ('he does not see but one way').

ليس معهما سوى مترجميهما.

lays-a ma'-a-humaa siwaa mutarjimay-himaa.

Only their two translators were with them.

3.24 *taHt-a* تحت 'underneath, under; below'

This semi-preposition refers to a location below, underneath or under something else.

عثر عليها تحت التراب.

'athar-a 'alay-haa taHt-a l-turaab-i.

He discovered it **under the ground**.

تحت إشراف الأمم المتحدة

taHt-a 'ishraaf-i l-'umam-i l-muttaHidat-i

under the supervision of the
United Nations

3.25 *Tiwaal-a* طوال 'during; for'

طوال السنوات الماضية

Tiwaal-a l-sanawaat-i l-maaDiyat-i

during past years; in years past

طوال أكثر من أربعة عقود

Tiwaal-a 'akthar-a min 'arba'at-i 'uquud-in

during/for more than four decades

3.26 *tujaah-a* تجاه 'facing, opposite, in front of; towards'

تجاه الدول النامية

tujaah-a l-duwal-i l-naamiyat-i

facing the developing nations

سلوك الغرب تجاه الشرق

suluuk-u l-gharb-i tujaah-a l-sharq-i

the behavior of the West towards the East

3.27 *waraa'-a* وراء 'behind; in back of'

تركه المسلمون وراءهم.

tarak-a-hu l-muslim-uuna waraa'-a-hum.

The Muslims left it **behind (them)**.

ظلّ يسعى وراء هدفه.

Zall-a ya-s'aa waraa'-a hadaf-i-hi.

He continued to pursue/run after
his goal.

3.28 *wasT-a* وَسَطَ 'in the middle of; in the midst of; among'

وسط المدينة

wasT-a l-madiinat-i

in the middle of the city

وسط هذه الدروب

wasT-a haadhihi l-duruub-i

among these alleyways

3.29 *xalf-a* خَلْفَ 'behind; in back of'

ما يكمن خلفها من حقائق

*maa ya-kmun-u xalf-a-haa min Haqaa'iq-a*that which is hidden **behind** it of truths

هو مختبئ خلف ستار.

*huwa muxtabi'-un xalf-a sitaarat-in.*He is hidden **behind** a curtain.3.30 *xaarij-a* خَارِجَ 'outside; outside of'

داخل أوبيك وخارجه

*daaxil-a 'uubiik wa-xaarij-a-hu*inside OPEC and **outside of** it

إلى أسواق خارج المملكة

*'ilaa 'aswaaq-in xaarij-a l-mamlakat-i*to markets **outside** the kingdom3.31 *xilaal-a* خَالِلَ 'during'; *min xilaal-i* مِنْ خَالِلَ 'through'

The word *xilaal-a* is used to denote an extension over a period of time; *min xilaal-i* is used in the meaning of 'via; through' or sometimes 'by means of.'

خلال العصور الوسطى

xilaal-a l-'uSuur-i l-wusTaa

during the Middle Ages

خلال دراسة مطوّلة

xilaal-a diraasat-in muTawwalat-in

during an extended study

أصبح جميلاً من خلال الفن.

*'aSbaH-a jamiil-an min xilaal-i l-fann-i.*It was made beautiful **through** art.3.32 *abr-a* عَبَرَ 'across, over'

ويمتدّ عبر قارّتين.

*wa ya-mtadd-u 'abr-a qaarrat-ayni.*It extends **across** two continents.

عبر عقود من الزمن

*'abr-a 'uquud-in min-a l-zaman-i***across** decades of time3.33 *'aqib-a* عَقِبَ 'right after, immediately after'

عقب إعلانها

*'aqib-a 'i'laan-i-haa*immediately after her
announcement

ذلك عقب تدخل عالي المستوى

*dhaalika 'aqib-a tadaxxul-in 'aalii l-mustawaa*that was **right after** a high-level intervention

3.34 ‘*ind-a* عند ‘on the part of’; ‘in the opinion of’; ‘near, by, at, upon’; ‘chez’

The semi-preposition ‘*ind-a*’ denotes location in space or time. It can also denote temporary location at the “place” where someone lives or works (e.g., *huwa ‘ind-a l-Tabiib-i* ‘He’s at the doctor’s’).

In spoken Arabic, ‘*ind-a*’ plays a fundamental role in the expression of possession, and some of that possession role has crept into MSA, especially in the relating of conversations or interviews where people are quoted directly. The more usual preposition to use for possession in formal MSA is *li-*, or the semi-preposition *ladaa*.

3.34.1 ‘*ind-a* ‘on the part of; in the opinion of’

عدم الفهم عند الكثير من قرائي

‘*adam-u l-fahm-i ‘ind-a l-kathiir-i min qurraa’-ii*

the lack of understanding on the part of many of my readers

الإسلام يتساوى عندهم مع التطرف.

al-’islaam-u ya-tasaawaa ‘ind-a-hum ma’-a l-taTarruf-i.

Islam for them (‘in their opinion’) equates with extremism.

3.34.2 Location in time

عند إلقاء القبض عليه

‘*ind-a ’ilqaa’-i l-qabD ‘alay-hi*

at the time of his arrest

بالقرب من شاطئ البحر عند انسحاب المدّ

bi-l-qurb-i min shaaTi’-i l-baHr-i

‘*ind-a nsiHaab-i l-madd-i*

near the seashore at ebb tide

3.34.3 Location in space

يجب التوقف عنده.

ya-jib-u l-tawaqquf-u ‘ind-a-hu.

It is necessary to stop at his [place].

عند آخر الطابور

‘*ind-a ’aaxir-i l-Taabuur-i*

at the end of the line

3.34.4 Possession

عندي مشكلة مع هذا الرجل.

‘*ind-ii mushkilat-un ma’-a haadhaa l-rajul-i.*

I have a problem with that man.

عندهم أصدقاء.

‘*ind-a-hum ’aSdiqaa’-u.*

They have friends.

3.34.5 Adverbial of time

‘*ind-a*’ may be suffixed with the adverbial markers *-maa* and *-idhin* to serve as an adverb denoting ‘time when.’ This expression is usually followed directly by a verb.

3.34.5.1 *‘ind-a-maa* ‘WHEN’

كان في العشرين من عمره عندما وصل إلى لندن.
kaan-a fii l-‘ishriina min ‘umr-i-hi ‘ind-a-maa waSal-a ‘ilaa landan.
 He was twenty years of age **when** he arrived in London.

عندما انخفض مستوى البحر	عندما نزلوا إلى الشارع
<i>‘ind-a-maa nxafaD-a mustawaa l-baHr-i</i>	<i>‘ind-a-maa nazal-uu ‘ilaa l-shaari‘-i</i>
when the sea level receded	when they came down into the street

3.34.5.2 *‘ind-a-idhin* عندئذٍ ‘AT THAT POINT IN TIME; THEN’

بدأت عندئذٍ في عمل بعض الرسوم.
bada‘-at ‘ind-a-idhin fii ‘amal-i ba‘D-i l-rusuum-i.
 She began **at that point** to make some drawings.

4 Prepositions with clause objects

Prepositions may take entire clauses as their objects, in which case they may be followed by the subordinating conjunctions *‘an* or *‘anna*. For more on subordinate clauses, see Chapter 19. Here are two examples:

كَأَنَّكَ تَأْكُلُ السَّمَكَ	وصفوه بأنه جوٌّ من الثقة.
<i>ka-‘anna-ka ta-‘kul-u l-samak-a</i>	<i>waSafuu-hu bi-‘anna-hu jaww-un min-a l-thiqat-i.</i>
as though you were eating fish	They described it as an atmosphere of trust.

Questions and question words

Question formation and the use of question words in Arabic are not complex. In general, the interrogative word is placed at the beginning of a sentence. There is no inversion of word order, usually just the insertion of the question word.

The most common question words in Arabic include:

<i>ʾayn-a</i>	‘where’	أَيْنَ
<i>ʾayy</i>	‘which; what’	أَيَّ
<i>kam</i>	‘how much; how many’	كَمْ
<i>kayf-a</i>	‘how’	كَيْفَ
<i>li-maadhaa</i>	‘why’	لِمَاذَا
<i>maa</i>	‘what’	مَا
<i>maadhhaa</i>	‘what’	مَاذَا
<i>man</i>	‘who/whom’	مَنْ
<i>mataa</i>	‘when’	مَتَى
<i>hal</i>	introduces yes/no question	هَلْ
<i>ʾa-</i>	introduces yes/no question	أَ

1 *ʾayn-a* أَيْنَ ‘where’

The question word *ʾayn-a* is invariable, even after a preposition. It always ends with *fatHa*.¹

إلى أين، يا سيدي؟	من أين أنت؟	أين هي اللجنة الوزارية؟
<i>ʾilaa ʾayn-a, yaa siidii?</i>	<i>min ʾayn-a ʾanta?</i>	<i>ʾayn-a hiya l-lajnat-u l-wizaariyyat-u?</i>
Where to, Sir?	Where are you from?	Where is it, the ministerial committee?

¹ Note that the question word *ʾayna* is not used as the locative adverb ‘where.’ To express an idea such as “at a university where he teaches,” the adverb *Hayth-u* is used for ‘where’: *fii jaamiʿat-in Hayth-u yu-darris-u*. See Chapter 11, section 3.1.3 for more on *Hayth-u*.

1.1 *ʾayn-a-maa* أَيْنَمَا ‘wherever’

With the addition of the function word *maa*, interrogative *ʾayna* becomes a conditional particle with the meaning of ‘wherever.’

أَيْنَمَا كُنْتُ

ʾayn-a-maa kunt-a

wherever you are

2 *ʾayy-un* أَيُّ ‘which; what’

As a question word, *ʾayy-* can be an indefinite noun, meaning ‘which one?’ or as the first part of a construct phrase, it specifies ‘which + noun.’ It may alternatively be followed by a pronoun suffix (e.g., أَيُّهُمْ *ʾayy-u-hum?* ‘which of them?’). It takes the full set of three case endings, depending on its function and placement in the sentence.²

لَأَيِّ دَوْلَةٍ تَذْهَبُ؟

li-ʾayy-i dawlat-in ta-dhhab-u?

To which country are you going?

أَيُّ مِنَ الْمُرْشَحِينَ؟

ʾayy-un min-a l-murashshaH-ayni?

Which one of the (two) candidates?

أَيُّ أَرْنَبٍ؟

ʾayy-u ʾarnab-in?

Which rabbit?/What rabbit?

3 *kam* كَمْ ‘how much; how many’

This question word is usually followed by a singular indefinite noun in the accusative case.³

كَمْ نَوْعاً مِنَ الْأَسْمَاكِ تَعْرِفُونَهُ؟

kam nawʿ-an min-a l-ʾasmaak-i ta-ʿrifiina-hu?

How many kinds of fish do you (f.) know?

كَمْ دَرْساً أَكْمَلْتُمْ؟

kam dars-an ʾakmal-tum?

How many lessons have you
(m. pl.) completed?

3.1 *kam* كَمْ + nominative

When the interrogative word *kam* has the meaning of ‘how much [is],’ it is followed by a definite noun (either with the definite article or with a pronoun suffix) in the nominative case:⁴

² The word *ʾayy-* also has a non-interrogative use as a determiner meaning ‘any.’ For more on this see Chapter 9, section 5.2.

³ The accusative case after *kam* is considered to be a form of *tamyiz*, or accusative of specification. For more on *tamyiz*, see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.7 and Chapter 11, section 6.

⁴ In this use of *kam*, it is actually a fronted predicate of an equational sentence; the noun is in the nominative as the subject/topic of an equational sentence.

كم الساعة؟

kam-i l-saa'at-u?

What time is it? ('How much is the hour?')

كم عمره؟

kam 'umr-u-hu?

How old is he? ('How much is his age?')

4 *kayf-a* كيف 'how'

The interrogative word *kayf-a* is invariable in case. It always ends with *fatHa*. It may be followed by a verb or by a noun.

كيف الحال؟

kayf-a l-Haal-u?

How are you? ('How is the condition?')

كيف وصلت إلى هنا؟

kayf-a waSal-ta 'ilaa hunaa?

How did you get (to) here?

كيف عرفت؟

kayf-a 'araf-ti?

How did you (f.) know?

كيف تتحرك؟

kayf-a ta-taHarrak-u?

How does it move?

5 *li-maadhaa* لماذا 'why; what for'

This is a compound word consisting of the preposition *li-* 'for' and the question word *maadhaa* 'what.' Thus its meaning of 'what for' or 'why.'

لماذا تحب السباحة؟

li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u l-sibaaHat-a?

Why do you like swimming?

لماذا اتجهت إلى التمثيل؟

li-maadhaa ttajah-ta 'ilaa l-tamthiil-i?

Why did you turn to acting?

فلماذا لا تترك الأمور على طبيعتها؟

fa-li-maadhaa laa ta-truk-u l-'umuur-a 'alaa Tabii'at-i-haa?

So why don't you leave matters as they ('naturally') are?

6 *maa* ما and *maadhaa* ماذا 'what'

The interrogatives *maa* and *maadhaa* have similar meanings but are used in different contexts. In general, *maa* is used in questions involving equational (verbless) sentences and *maadhaa* is used with verbs.⁵

6.1 *maa* 'what'

Interrogative *maa* is used with verbless predications.

ما اسمك؟

maa sm-u-ka?

What [is] your (m.) name?

ما رأيك؟

maa ra'y-u-ki?

What [is] your (f.) opinion?

⁵ Interrogative *maa* is probably not used with verbs because it is a homonym with negative *maa*, which when used with a verb indicates negation (e.g., *maa 'adrii* 'I don't know.').

ما الفرق؟

maa l-farq-u?

What [is] the difference?

ما السبب؟

maa l-sabab-u?

What [is] the reason?

When used to ask a question with a longer noun phrase, *maa* may be followed directly by an independent third person personal pronoun acting as a copula in the question:

ما هي المهمة الأولى؟

maa hiya l-mahammat-u l-^uuulaa?

What is the first task ('What is it, the first task')?

ما هي أهم مشاكل التلوث؟

maa hiya ^aahamm-u mashaakil-i l-talawwuth-i?

What are the most important problems of pollution?

('What are they, the most important problems of pollution')?

6.2 *maadhaa* ماذا 'what'

The question word *maadhaa* is used mainly with verbs:

ماذا جرى؟

maadhaa jaraa?

What happened?

ماذا يفعل أهلك؟

maadhaa ya-f^cal-u ^aahl-u-ka?

What [will] your family do?

ماذا تعتقد؟

maadhaa ta-^ctaqid-u?

What do you think?

ماذا تأكل؟

maadhaa ta-^akul-u?

What does it eat?

6.2.1 *maadhaa* as pronoun

Sometimes *maadhaa* is used like a relative pronoun meaning 'that which,' or 'what':

لا أفهم ماذا تقول.

*laa ^aa-fham-u maadhaa ta-quul-u.*I don't understand **what** you are saying.

6.2.3 *maadhaa* 'an' 'what about'

The interrogative phrase *maadhaa* 'an is used to express a general query about a topic.

ماذا عن القادة الآخرين؟

maadhaa 'an-i l-qaadat-i l-'aaxar-iina?

What about the other leaders?

7 *man* مَنْ ‘who; whom’

This word is used both as an interrogative pronoun and as an indefinite pronoun. Because it ends in *sukuun*, it needs a helping vowel, *kasra*, if it precedes a consonant cluster.

مَنْ هُوَ؟

man huwa?

Who is he?

مَنْ الرَّئِيسِ السَّابِقِ؟

man-i l-ra' iis-u l-saabiq-u?

Who is the former president?

8 *mataa* مَتَى ‘when’

The question word *mataa* is also invariable, ending in *ʾalif maqSuura*. Note that *mataa* is used only as an interrogative, not as a connective adverb meaning ‘when.’⁶

مَتَى وَجَدْتَهُ؟

mataa wajad-ta-hu?

When did you find it?

مَتَى انْتَشَرَتِ الْحَيَاةُ الْحَضَارِيَّةُ؟

mataa ntashar-at-i l-Hayaat-u l-HaDaariyyat-u?

When did civilized life spread?

مَتَى يَرْحَلُ عَنْ بَيْرُوتِ؟

mataa ya-rHal-u ʿan bayruut-a?

When is he departing from Beirut?

مَتَى وَصَلَتْ؟

mataa waSal-at?

When did she arrive?

9 *hal* and *ʾa-* -إِ ‘interrogative markers’

Both *hal* and *ʾa-* are prefixed to statements in order to convert them into yes/no questions. They have equivalent functional meaning, but different distribution: *hal* is used with a wide range of constructions; *ʾa-* is restricted in that it is not used before a noun with the definite article or words that start with *ʾalif* plus *hamza*, such as *ʾanta* ‘you.’ Neither word is translatable into English, since shift in word order is the signal of yes/no question formation in English.

9.1 *hal* هَلْ

هَلْ أَنَا كُمْبِيُوتِرْ؟

hal ʾanaa kumbyuutir?

Am I a computer?

هَلْ رُوعِيَ الرَّأْيُ الْعَامُّ؟

hal ruuʿiy-a l-raʾy-u l-ʿaamm-u?

Was public opinion taken into account?

هَلْ بِالْإِمْكَانِ أَنْ نَبْدَأَ؟

hal bi-l-ʾimkaan-i ʾan na-bdaʾ-a?

May we begin?

هَلْ أَخَذْتَ الزَّجَاجَةَ مِنْ هُنَا؟

hal ʾaxadh-ta l-zujaajat-a min hunaa?

Did you take the glass from here?

⁶ See time adverbials in Chapter 18, and in Chapter 11, section 3.1.3.

9.2 'a- -أ

This 'alif plus hamza is prefixed to a word, but not if the word begins with 'alif:

أليس كذلك؟

'a-lays-a ka-dhaalika?

Isn't that so?

أهذا سمير؟

'a-haadhaa samiir-un?

Is this Samir?

9.2.1 'a-laa

Negative yes/no interrogatives are usually prefaced with 'a-laa:

ألا تعني تعصباً؟

'a-laa ta-^enii ta^eaSSub-an?

Doesn't it mean bigotry?

ألا يعني تقهقراً؟

'a-laa ya-^enii taqahqur-an?

Doesn't it mean regression?

Connectives and conjunctions

Connectives – words or phrases that connect one part of discourse with another – are a pervasive feature of MSA syntax.¹ Arabic sentences and clauses within a text are connected and interconnected by means of words or phrases (such as *wa-* ‘and’) that coordinate, subordinate, and otherwise link them semantically and syntactically. This frequent use of connectives results in a high degree of textual cohesion in Arabic writing that contrasts significantly with the terser style of written English. Not only are parts of Arabic sentences coordinated or subordinated in various ways, but most sentences within a text actually start with a connective word that links each sentence with the previous ones.

Even paragraphs are introduced with connectives that connect them to the text as a whole. As Al-Batal remarks: “MSA seems to have a connecting constraint that requires the writer to signal continuously to the reader, through the use of connectives, the type of link that exists between different parts of the text. This gives the connectives special importance as text-building elements and renders them essential for the reader’s processing of text” (1990, 256).

Connective words that link sentences within a text are referred to as “discourse markers.”² Analysis of discourse markers in English has tended to focus on spoken conversation whereas analysis of discourse markers in Arabic (Al-Batal 1990, Johnstone 1990, Kammensjö 1993) has focused particularly on the structure of written narrative. Arabic writing has been characterized as syndetic, that is, as using conjunctions to link discourse elements; and it has also been described as formulaic, that is, relying on “fixed sets of words” (Johnstone 1990, 218) to make

¹ I use the term “connective” after Al-Batal 1990, whose research on Arabic connectives has been crucial to our understanding of their nature and importance. He gives the following definition: “any element in a text which indicates a linking or transitional relationship between phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or larger units of discourse, exclusive of referential or lexical ties” (1994, 91). Other terms used to refer to these words include “connectors,” “function words,” and “particles.”

² Schiffrin, in her work *Discourse Markers*, brings attention to the importance of cohesive elements as interpretive links that connect the “underlying propositional content” of one discourse element with another (1987, 9). She states that markers work “on the discourse level” and that they “have a sequencing function of relating syntactic units and fitting them into a textual or discourse context” (1987, 37).

semantic and syntactic links. In certain instances, short function words such as *wa-* ‘and,’ actually function in Arabic texts as punctuation marks would function in English texts. These connective words are therefore not always translatable because they sometimes perform strictly grammatical functions rather than adding semantic content. At the discourse or text level, the presence of appropriate connectives is an important feature of “acceptability,” according to Al-Batal, who notes that although “no explicit or formal rules exist,” interconnection between sentences is essential to authentic Arabic texts.³

Connectives are therefore an important topic in studying Arabic. However, like the category of adverbials, the class of words and phrases used as connectives is large and heterogeneous. Different types of words and word groups serve as connectives: conjunctions, adverbs, particles, and also certain idiomatic or set phrases. These elements link at different discourse levels (phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph) and in different ways, some simply coordinating or introducing text elements, and others requiring particular grammatical operations (e.g., subjunctive mood on verb, accusative case on nouns). There are therefore differences in the form, distribution, and function of connectives.⁴ Moreover, different researchers classify members of these categories in different ways.

At the sentence level, traditional Arabic grammarians classify particles (*Huruuf* حروف) according to whether or not they have a grammatical effect on the following phrase or clause. For instance, the particle *kay* كَي ‘in order that’ requires the following verb to be in the subjunctive mood; the negative particle *lam* لَمْ requires the verb to be in the jussive mood; and the subordinating conjunction *’anna* أَنْ ‘that’ requires the subject of the following clause to be either a suffix pronoun or a noun in the accusative case. Thus the **operational effect** (‘*amal* عمل) of the function word is a primary feature in its classification. The effects of these particles on the syntax and inflectional status of sentence elements form a major component in the theoretical framework and analysis of Arabic syntax.⁵

Along these lines, connectives are presented here according to whether or not they exercise a grammatical effect on the following sentence element.

³ Al-Batal points out that a lack of sentence-initial connectives in otherwise “perfectly grammatical” Arabic texts written by nonnative speakers of Arabic reveals a stylistic gap that affects the acceptability of such texts, whose structures do not correspond with “the frequent usage of connectives that is characteristic of Arabic written texts” (1990, 253).

⁴ For further discussion of the nature of Arabic connectives, see Al-Batal 1990 and 1994 as well as Johnstone 1990. For further description and exercises with Arabic connectives, see al-Warraki and Hassanein, 1994.

⁵ For analysis of Arabic syntactic theory in English, see Beeston 1970; Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 49–72; Cantarino 1974–1976 (all three volumes); Holes 1995, 160–247 and Wright II:1–349.

In one class are the many connecting words that serve linking functions only, without requiring a grammatical change, called here “**simple linking connectives**.”⁶

In the other class are the “**operative particles**” (*Huruuf ‘aamila* حروف عاملة) that require inflectional modification of the phrase or clause that they introduce. This class includes, for example, particles that require the subjunctive or the jussive on following verbs, or particles that require the accusative case on nouns, adjectives, and noun phrases. These “operative particles” are dealt with under separate headings in this book. See the sections on subjunctive, jussive, negation and exception, *‘inna* and her sisters, and the section on cases and their functions.

In some instances, a connective may have more than one function and may fall into both classes: simple linking and operative.⁷

This chapter deals primarily with **simple linking connectives**.

1 *wa-* ‘and’ (*waaw al-‘aTf* واو العطف)

This connective is of the highest frequency of all (almost 50 percent of all Arabic connectives) and occurs at all levels of text to “signal an additive relationship” (Al-Batal 1990, 245).⁸

1.1 Sentence starter *wa-*

Sentences within an expository text after the introductory sentence are often initiated with *wa-* ‘and’ and/or another connective expression. The following examples are beginnings of typical sentences. As a sentence-starter, *wa-* is considered good style in Arabic, but it is not usually translated into English because English style rules normally advise against starting sentences with ‘and.’

... وغادر القاهرة أمس مساعد وزير الدفاع

wa-ghaadar-a l-qaahirat-a ‘ams-i musaa‘id-u waziir-i l-difaa‘-i ...

(And) the assistant minister of defense left Cairo yesterday ...

... ووصل الرئيسان إلى العاصمة أمس

wa-waSal-a l-ra‘iis-aani ‘ilaa l-‘aaSimat-i ‘ams-i ...

(And) the two presidents arrived in the capital yesterday ...

⁶ These include what Al-Batal refers to as *Huruuf muhmala* ‘inoperative particles,’ *Huruuf zaa‘ida* ‘redundant or augmentative particles,’ and *Huruuf al-‘aTf* ‘coordinating particles’ (1990, 236).

⁷ For example, *wa-* as a coordinating conjunction does not exercise a grammatical effect on the following phrase, but when used as the *waaw al-ma‘iyya*, ‘the *waaw* of accompaniment,’ it requires the following noun to be in the accusative case. For more on this see Baalbaki 1986 and Wright 1967, II:83–84.

⁸ According to Schiffrin (1987, 141) “and” is “a discourse coordinator; the presence of *and* signals the speaker’s identification of an upcoming unit which is coordinate in structure to some prior unit.”

وثمة علماء يعتقدون أن ...

wa-thammat-a ʿulamaaʾ-u ya-ʿtaqid-uuna ʾanna ...

(And) there are scholars who believe that ...

وتشير مصادر كردية إلى أن ...

wa-tu-shiir-u maSaadir-u kurdiyyat-un ʾilaa ʾanna ...

(And) Kurdish sources indicate that ...

1.2 Coordinating conjunction *wa*-

The coordinating conjunction *wa*- ‘and’ functions as an additive term within sentences to link clauses, phrases, and words. In particular, Arabic uses *wa*- in lists where in English a comma would be used to separate each item. The items in the list retain the case determined by their role in the sentence.

منها مصر والأردن والكويت ولبنان وقطر وعمان ودولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

والمملكة العربية السعودية.

*min-haa miSr-u wa-l-ʾurdunn-u wa-l-kuwayt-u wa-lubnaan-u wa-qaTar-u wa-ʿumaan-u
wa-dawlat-u l-imaaraat-i l-ʿarabiyyat-i l-muttahidat-i wa-l-mamlakat-u l-ʿarabiyyat-u
l-saʿuudiyyat-u.*

Among them are Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Oman, the (‘State of’) the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

يتعلق بقضايا العراق والسودان وليبيا والصومال والبوسنة وكشمير والشيخان.

*ya-taʿallaq-u bi-qaDaayaa l-ʿiraaq-i wa-l-suudaan-i wa-liibyaa wa-l-Suumaal-i
wa-l-buusin-i wa-kashmiir-a wa-l-shiishaan-i.*

It relates to the problems of Iraq, The Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Bosnia, Kashmir, and Chechnia.

مواد أدبية ولغوية وتاريخية وفلسفية

mawaadd-u ʾadabiyyat-un wa-lughawiyyat-un wa-taariixiyyat-un wa-falsafiyyat-un
literary, linguistic, historical, and philosophical materials

2 *fa*- فَـ ‘and so; and then; yet; and thus’

This connector implies several different kinds of relationships with the previous text elements. It can have a sequential meaning ‘and then,’ a resultative meaning ‘and so’ (*faaʾ al-sababiyya* فاء السببية), a contrastive meaning ‘yet; but,’ a slight shift in topic ‘and also; moreover,’ or a conclusive meaning, ‘and therefore; in conclusion.’⁹ Beeston refers to it as “the most interesting of the ambivalent functionals” (1970, 98).

⁹ Al-Batal refers to it as “the most complex and the most interesting” connective in his research because of the different functions that it has (1990, 100). Cantarino 1975, III:20–34 has an extensive analysis of the functions of *fa*-, with examples taken from literary contexts.

It may start a sentence in a text or it may knit elements together within a sentence.

فهم ما زالوا مهتمين بأحداث الإنتفاضة.

fa-hum maa zaal-uu muhtamm-iina bi-³aHdaath-i l-intifaaDat-i.

Yet they are still interested in the events of the uprising.

وإذا لم يلغ الآخر، فإنه يتجاهله.

wa-³idhaa lam ya-lghi l-³aaxar . . . fa-³inna-hu ya-tajaahal-u-hu.

If he doesn't abolish the other . . . (then) he ignores it.

فتحت الباب فانفتح.

fataH-tu l-baab-a fa-nfataH-a.

I opened the door and [so] it opened.

ما دام خارجة من الشرعية ، فإن المقاطعة مستمرة.

maa daam-at xaarijat-an min-a l-shar^ciyyat-i, fa-³inna l-muqaaTa^cat-a mustamirr-at-un.

As long as it remains outside the law, (then) the boycott will continue.

3 Contrastive conjunctions

These conjunctions indicate contrast in semantic content between two parts of a sentence.

3.1 *bal* بَلْ 'rather; but actually'

The word *bal* is termed an "adversative" by Al-Batal because it introduces a clause whose semantic content conveys the idea of something additional but also different or contrastive from the main clause.¹⁰

وترجمت هذه الكتب إلى اللاتينية بل كتب معظمها بحروف عبرية.

wa-turjim-at haadhihi l-kutub-u ³ilaa l-laatiiniyyat-i bal kutib-a mu^cZam-u-haa

bi-Huruuf-in ^cibriyyat-in.

These books were translated into Latin, but [actually] they were mostly written in Hebrew script ('letters').

ليس في الأمر تمة صقور أو حمام بل هناك توزيع واسع للأدوار.

lays-a fii l-³amr-i thammat-a Suquur-un ³aw Hamaa³im-u bal hunaaka tawzii^c-un

waasi^c-un li-l-³adwaar-i.

There are in the matter neither hawks nor doves, but rather there is a wide distribution of roles.

¹⁰ See also under "negative and exceptive expressions."

3.2 *ʔinna-maa* إِنَّمَا /*wa-ʔinna-maa* وَإِنَّمَا ‘but; but moreover; but also, rather’

This connective word has both confirmational and contrastive components to its meaning.¹¹

لم تكن تسجيلاً فقط وإنما هو انعكاس للواقع الاجتماعي.

lam ta-kun tasjiil-an faqaT wa-ʔinna-maa huwa nʕikaas-un li-l-waaqʕ-i l-ijtimaaʕiyy-i.

It was not only documentation, **but moreover** a reflection of social reality.

4 Explanatory conjunctions

4.1 *ʔay* أَي ‘that is, i.e.’

This small word (which resembles in spelling the word *ʔayy* ‘which’ but is unrelated to it) is an explicative particle equivalent to the Latin abbreviation *i.e.*, for *id est* ‘that is,’ which is used in English texts.

أَيُّ كُلِّ مَا هُوَ وَاقِعِي

ʔay, kull-u maa huwa waaqiʕiyy-un

that is, everything that is real

5 Resultative conjunctions

5.1 *ʔidh* إِذْ ‘since,’ ‘inasmuch as’

This small word is a resultative particle that introduces a clause providing a rationale or reason for the main clause.

حَقَّقَ الحزب الجمهوريَّ الحاكم نصراً ساحقاً على منافسيه إذ حصل على معظم المقاعد.

Haqqaq-a l-Hizb-u l-jumhuuriyy-u l-Haakim-u naSr-an saaHiq-an ʕalaa munaafis-ii-hi ʔidh

HaSal-a ʕalaa muʕZam-i l-maqaaʕ-id-i.

The ruling republican party realized an overwhelming victory over its opponents **since** it obtained most of the seats.

5.2 *ʔidhan* إِذَنْ (spelled with *nuun*) and *ʔidh-an* إِذَا (spelled with *nunation*) ‘therefore; then; so; thus; in that case’

This connective word initiates a clause or question that comes as a result or conclusion from a previous statement. In more conversational style, it may also come at the end of the clause.

إذن لماذا يتوجب علينا ...

ʔidhan li-maadhaa ya-tawajjab-u ʕalay-naa ...

Then why do we have to ...

إذن هناك منهجان ...

ʔidhan hunaaka manhaj-aani ...

Thus, there are two methods ...

¹¹ See al-Warraki and Hassanein 1994, 59–63 for further discussion.

سيكون قطاً كبيراً إذن!

sa-ya-kuun-u qiT-an kabiir-an 'idhan!

It'll be a big cat, then!

5.3 *Hattaa* حَتَّى + past tense: 'until'

Hattaa followed by a past tense verb introduces a clause that shows the consequences or result of the previous clause. Used in this way, it refers to an event or action that has taken place in the past.¹²

ولم تزل في النمو حتى أصبحت من أهم مدن المنطقة.

wa-lam ta-zul fii l-namuw-w-i *Hattaa* 'aSbaH-at min 'ahamm-i mudun-i l-minTaqaat-i.

It kept growing until it became [one] of the most important cities of the region.

6 Adverbial conjunctions

Adverbial conjunctions in Arabic fill the role of subordinating conjunctions in English such as 'where,' 'when,' 'while,' and 'as.' That is, they introduce a clause subordinate to the main clause by indicating a place, time, manner, or result relation between the two.

6.1 Adverbial conjunctions of place: *Hayth-u* حَيْثُ 'where'

The connective adverb *Hayth-u* denotes the concept of 'where' or 'in which.' It has an invariable *Damma* suffix.¹³ It is an extensively used conjunction of place. It also has non-locative meanings when used with other particles, such as *min Hayth-u* 'regarding; as for' or *bi-Hayth-u* 'so that; so as to.'¹⁴

في كلية حيث تدرس

fii kulliyat-in *Hayth-u* tu-darris-u

in a college where she teaches

حيث القديم يختلط مع الحديث

Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma^c-a l-Hadiith-i

where the old mixes with the new

في السعودية حيث يعمل مع شركة دولية

fii l-sa^cuudiyyat-i *Hayth-u* ya^c-mal-u ma^c-a sharikat-in duwaliyaat-in

in Saudi Arabia where he works for an international company

في مستشفى حيث تقع قصص حب

fii mustashfan *Hayth-u* ta-qa^c-u qiSaS-u Hubb-in

in a hospital where love stories take place

¹² *Hattaa* may also be an operative particle with the meaning of 'until; up to the point of,' followed by a noun in the genitive case (*Hattaa* l-sanat-i l-maaDiyat-i 'until last year'), but in that case it is considered a preposition. See Chapter 16, section 2.2.3. As a particle of purpose, it has the meaning of 'in order to' followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood (see Chapter 34, section. 2.2.6).

¹³ Note that the question word 'where?' is different: 'ayna. See Chapter 17, section 1.

¹⁴ For exercises on and further examples of the uses of *Hayth-u*, as well as the conjunctions *Hayth-u* 'anna and *bi-Hayth-u*, see al-Warraki and Hassanein 1994, 93–97.

6.2 Adverbial conjunctions of time

This category includes expressions that link clauses by specifying how one clause is related to another in terms of time. These adverbials often consist of traditional *Zuruuf*, the semi-prepositions or locative adverbs, plus the indefinite relative pronoun *maa*, and sometimes the adverbial suffix *-idhin*.

The locative adverbs, as noted in the chapter on prepositions and prepositional phrases, are essentially nouns of place that act as prepositions by going into a construct relationship with another noun (e.g., *بعد الحرب* *ba‘d-a l-Harb-i* ‘after the war,’ *سنة قبل* *qabl-a sanat-in* ‘a year ago’). These nouns with the accusative marker are restricted to occurring only before other nouns or pronouns unless a buffer (such as *maa* or *‘idhin*) is added to them. The locative adverb and buffer may be written together as one word, or they are written separately. By adding the buffer element, the semi-prepositions or locative adverbs are converted into adverbial elements that can directly precede verbs and entire clauses.

6.2.1 *bayn-a-maa* بَيْنَمَا ‘while; whereas’

This connective word has both a temporal meaning ‘while, during the time that,’ and also a contrastive meaning of ‘whereas.’

ضُبُّطُوا بَيْنَمَا كَانُوا يَسْتَهْلِكُونَ الْمَخْذَرَّ.

DubiT-uu bayn-a-maa kaan-uu ya-stahlik-uuna l-muxaddir-a.

They were arrested **while** they were consuming the drug.

فَكَانَتِ الثَّقَافَةُ الْعَرَبِيَّةُ رَسْمِيَّةً بَيْنَمَا ظَلَّتِ اللَّاتِينِيَّةُ الْعَامَّةُ لُغَةً لِلنَّاسِ.

fa-kaan-at-i l-thaqaafat-u l-‘arabiyyat-u rasmiyyat-an bayn-a-maa Zall-at-i l-laatiiniyyat-u l-‘aammāt-u lughat-an li-l-naas-i.

Arabic culture was official **whereas** vernacular Latin remained a language of the people.

6.2.2 *ba‘d-a-maa* بَعْدَمَا ‘after’

This connective is usually followed directly by a past tense verb. Note that the preposition *ba‘d-a* ‘after’ can be followed only by a noun or pronoun; it is necessary to use *ba‘d-a-maa* before a clause beginning with a verb.

بَعْدَمَا شَاهَدَهُ أَحَدُ الْمَارَّةِ

ba‘d-a-maa shaahad-a-hu ‘aHad-u l-maarrat-i
after one of the passers-by saw him

بَعْدَمَا وَقَعَتْ عَلَى الثَّلْجِ

ba‘d-a-maa waqa‘-at ‘alaa l-thalj-i
after she fell on the ice

بَعْدَمَا قُدِّمَ لِلرَّئِيسِ تَعَاذِيهِ

ba‘d-a-maa quddim-a li-l-ra‘iis-i ta‘aazii-hi
after his condolences had been presented to the president

6.2.3 *ba^cd-a 'an* 'بعد أن' 'after'

The expression *ba^cd-a 'an* means essentially the same as *ba^cd-a maa* when describing a situation that has taken place in the past. The phrase *ba^cd-a 'an*, when referring to an event that has already taken place, is followed by a clause with a past tense verb.¹⁵

غادر القاهرة أمس بعد أن قابل الرئيس.

ghaadar-a l-qaahirat-a 'ams-i ba^cd-a 'an qaabal-a l-ra'iis-a.

He left Cairo yesterday after he met with the President.

بعد أن شارك اللاعبون في عدة مسابقات مختلفة

ba^cd-a 'an shaarak-a l-laa'ib-uuna fii 'iddat-i musaabaqaat-in muxtalifat-in

after the players had participated in several different contests

6.2.3 *ba^cd-a-'idhin* 'بعدئذٍ' 'after that; then; subsequently'

This compound expression is equivalent in most situations to the adverbial conjunction *thumma* (see below 6.2.8):

وبعدئذٍ انتقل إلى دار كريم.

wa-ba^cd-a-'idhin-i ntaqal-a 'ilaa daar-i kariim-in.

After that he moved to Karim's house.

6.2.4 *Hiin-a-maa* 'حينما' and *Hiin-a* 'حين' 'when; at the time when'

لكن الأزمة نشبت حينما عرقلت الشرطة دخول الطلاب

laakinna l-'azmat-a nashab-at Hiin-a-maa 'arqal-at-i l-shurTat-u duxuul-a l-Tullaab-i

but the crisis broke out when the police obstructed the entrance of students

حينما أصبحت العاصمة

Hiin-a-maa 'aSbaH-at-i l-'aaSimat-a

when it became the capital

6.2.5 *'ind-a-maa* 'عندما' 'when; at the time when'

عندما جئنا إلى هنا

'ind-a-maa ji'naa 'ilaa hunaa

when we came here

عندما تتقدم في الأمر

'ind-a-maa ta-taqaddam-u fii l-'umr-i

when they grow older ('advance in age')

¹⁵ When referring to a non-past situation, or a hypothetical situation, *ba^cd-a 'an* is followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood. For example,

سندرس بعد أن نأكل

sa-na-drus-u ba^cd-a 'an na-'kul-a.

We will study after we eat.

6.2.6 'ind-a-^oidhin عِنْدَئِذٍ 'then; at that point in time; at that time'

ولا بدَّ عِنْدَئِذٍ مِنْ طَرَحِ قَضِيَّةِ الْإِنْسِحَابِ.

wa laa budd-a 'inda-^oidhin min TarH-i qaDiyat-i l-insiHaab.

Rejection of the issue of withdrawal was inevitable at that point.

6.2.7 qabl-a 'an قَبْلَ أَنْ + subjunctive 'before'

Contrasting with *ba'd-a 'an*, *qabl-a 'an* refers to an action anterior to the action in the main clause. The verb after *qabl-a 'an* is in the subjunctive mood, even if the main clause reference is past tense.

وصلت قوات الأمن إلى المطار قبل أن يهبط.

waSal-at quwwaat-u l-'amn-i 'ilaa l-maTaari *qabl-a 'an* ya-hbuT-a.

The security forces arrived at the airport before he landed.

قبل أن تمرّقه الحرب

qabl-a 'an tu-mazziq-a-hu l-Harb-u

before war tears it apart

6.2.8 thumm-a ثُمَّ 'then; and then; subsequently'

The connective particle *thumm-a* is an adverb that indicates a sequential action, coming later in time than the action in the preceding sentence or clause.

ثمَّ ضَعَهَا فِيْمَا بَعْدَ فِي صَنْدُوقِ.

thumm-a Da'-haa fii-maa ba'd-u
fii Sanduuq-in.

Then put it in a box later.

ثمَّ أَنْشَدُوا النِّشِيدَ الْوَطَنِيَّ.

thumm-a 'anshad-uu l-nashiid-a
l-waTaniyy-a.

Then they sang the national anthem.

6.3 Adverbial conjunctions of similarity

These expressions predicate a state of similarity with something that has gone before, either in a previous statement or earlier in the same sentence.

6.3.1 ka-maa كَمَا 'as; just as; similarly; likewise'

The expression *ka-maa* is usually followed by a verb phrase.

كما ذَكَرَ الْمُتَحَدِّثُ

ka-maa dhakar-a l-mutaHaddith-u

the spokesman likewise mentioned

كما فَعَلُوا السَّنَةَ الْمَاضِيَةَ

ka-maa fa'al-uu l-sanat-a l-maaDiyat-a

just as they did last year

6.3.2 mithl-a-maa مِثْلَمَا 'like; just as; as'

مِثْلَمَا يَقُولُ أَهْلِي ...

mithl-a-maa ya-quul-u 'ahl-ii ...

as my family says ...

6.4 Adverbial conjunction of equivalence: *qadr-a-maa* قَدْرَمَا
‘as much as; just as; as . . . as’

إِنَّ أَمَامَنَا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْفُرْصِ قَدْرَمَا أَمَامَنَا مِنَ التَّحَدِّيَّاتِ.
‘inna ‘amaam-a-naa kathiir-an min-a l-furaS-i *qadr-a-maa* ‘amaam-a-naa min-a
l-taHaddiyyaat-i.

There are [just] as many opportunities before us as there are challenges.

6.5 Adverbial conjunction of reference or attribution: *Hasab-a-maa* حَسَبَمَا
‘according to; in accordance with; depending on’

This conjunction links one clause to another clause, expressing a relationship of reference or attribution.¹⁶

وَحَسَبَمَا تَقُولُ الْأَسْطُورَةُ . . .
wa-*Hasab-a-maa* ta-quul-u l-‘usTuurat-u . . .
according to what legend says . . .

حَسَبَمَا جَرَتْ تَسْمِيَّتُهَا آنَ ذَاكَ
Hasab-a-maa jar-at tasmiyat-u-haa ‘aan-a-dhaaka
in accordance with its naming at that time

6.6 Adverbial conjunctions of potential or possibility

6.6.1 *rubba-a-maa* رُبَّمَا ‘perhaps; maybe; possibly’¹⁷

رُبَّمَا كَانَ كَثِيرُونَ مِنْهُمْ مُسَجَّلِينَ.
rubba-maa kaan-a kathiir-uuna min-hum musajjal-iina.
Perhaps many of them were registered.

رُبَّمَا لِهَذَا السَّبَبِ . . .
rubba-maa li-haadhaa l-sabab-i . . .
perhaps for this reason . . .

رُبَّمَا كُنْتُ وَاثِقًا مِنْ نَفْسِي أَكْثَرَ مِنَ الْلُزُومِ.
rubba-maa kun-tu waathiq-an min nafs-ii ‘akthar-a min-a l-luzuum-i.
Perhaps I was overconfident.

7 Disjunctives

Arabic has a set of particles that indicate disjunction, that is, a distinction between one alternative and another. They include the following:

¹⁶ As for the expressions *Hasab-a* and *bi-Hasab-i* ‘according to,’ these are not conjunctions but operative particles that are followed by a noun in the genitive case.

¹⁷ For another word meaning ‘perhaps’ see *la‘alla* in Chapter 19 on ‘inna and her sisters.

7.1 ^ʔaw أو 'or'

This disjunctive indicates an option between two or more elements, but that option is **inclusive**, that is, it may include one, both, or all the elements.

عن قصد أو من غير قصد	يريدونه حياً أو ميتاً.
^ʔ an qaSd-in ^ʔ aw min ghayr-i qaSd-in	yu-riid-uuna-hu Hayy-an ^ʔ aw mayyit-an.
on purpose or not on purpose	They want him dead or alive ('alive or dead').

لنجاح الحزب الحاكم أو فشله
 li-najaaH-i l-Hizb-i l-Haakim-i ^ʔaw fashl-i-hi
 for the success of the ruling party or its failure

7.2 ^ʔam أم 'or'

This disjunctive indicates an **exclusive option**; one or the other, but not both or all. Because it ends with *sukuun*, it sometimes needs a helping vowel, *kasra*.

اللحن أم الكلمة أم الصوت؟
 al-laHn-u ^ʔam-i l-kalimat-u ^ʔam-i l-Sawt-u?
 the tune, or the words, or the voice?

أساتذة كانوا أم طلاباً
^ʔasaatidhat-an kaan-uu ^ʔam Tullaab-an
 [whether] they were professors or students

7.2.1 ^ʔa with ^ʔam

Sometimes the particle ^ʔa- is used on the first element of the exclusive disjunction:

لم يدري أيشتم أم يضحك.
 lam ya-dri ^ʔa -ya-shtam-u ^ʔam ya-DHak-u.
 He didn't know whether to curse or laugh.

7.3 ^ʔimmaa . . . ^ʔaw أو . . . إما . . . ; ^ʔimmaa . . . wa-^ʔimmaa وإما . . . 'either . . . or'

This two-part disjunctive conveys the idea of an exclusive choice: one or the other, but not both. Sometimes the first part of the disjunction is followed by ^ʔan plus a verb in the subjunctive, but not always.

هذا السلام إما أن يكون شاملاً أو لا يكون أبداً.
 haadhaa l-salaam-u ^ʔimmaa ^ʔan ya-kuun-a shaamil-an ^ʔaw laa ya-kuun-u ^ʔabad-an.
 This peace is either inclusive, or it is not at all.

إما أن تكونوا معنا وإما مع الإرهاب.
^ʔimmaa ^ʔan ta-kuun-uu ma^ʕ-a-naa wa-^ʔimmaa ma^ʕ-a l-^ʔirhaab-i.
 Either you are with us or [you are] with terrorism.

8 Sentence-starting connectives

In addition to single words as sentence-introducers and connectors, there are also many fixed expressions or idiomatic phrases that serve to start sentences. This process of using a starting formula to introduce a sentence is especially common in journalistic and expository writing and gives it what Johnstone refers to as a certain “formulaicity.”¹⁸ Some of the more common phrasal starters are listed here.

8.1 Participle or adjective starters with *min-a l-*

A definite adjective or passive participle, often preceded by the partitive preposition *min*, is a common way of introducing a sentence, especially in journalistic prose. This use of *min* is termed “pleonastic” (superfluous or redundant).¹⁹ It is a way of opening a statement with a generic or general observation, just as “It is . . .” may be used in English.

ومن المتوقع أن ...	من الممكن أن ...
<i>wa-min-a l-mutawaqqa^c-i ^ʔan ...</i>	<i>min-a l-mumkin-i ^ʔan ...</i>
It is expected that ...	It is possible that ...

من المهمّ عدم تقديم الكثير من التنازلات.
min-a l-muhimm-i ^cadam-u taqdiim-i l-kathiir-i min-a l-tanaazulaat-i.
 It is important not to offer too many concessions.

من الطبيعيّ أن نقوم بزيارة ...
min-a l-Tabii^c‘iyy-i ^ʔan na-quum-a bi-ziyaarat-in ...
 It is natural that we undertake a visit ...

8.1.1 Starters without *min*

Sometimes participle or adjective starters are used on their own, without *min*, but usually preceded by *wa-*.

ومعلوم أن ...	والمستغرب أن ...
<i>wa-ma^cluum-un ^ʔanna ...</i>	<i>wa-l-mustaghrab-u ^ʔanna ...</i>
It is known that ...	The strange [thing] is ...

8.2 Passive and passive-like starters

With or without *wa-* a passive verb in the third person masculine singular may initiate a sentence by introducing a general, unattributed observation. In addition to the morphological passive, a Form V or Form VII verb with passive meaning is sometimes used.

¹⁸ Johnstone 1990, 223.

¹⁹ See also pleonastic *min*, Chapter 16, section 2.2.2.7.

وَعُلِمَ أَنَّ ... يُشَارُ إِلَى ...
wa-‘ulim-a ³anna ... *yu-shaar-u* ³ilaa ...
 (And) it has been learned that ... It is indicated ...

وَيُذَكَّرُ أَنَّ الْأَمِينَ الْعَامَ ...
wa-yu-dhkar-u ³anna l-²amiin-a l-²aamm-a ...
 (And) it is mentioned that the Secretary General ...

وَيَتَوَقَّعُ أَنْ يَشْمَلَ التَّقْرِيرُ اقْتِرَاحاً ...
wa-ya-tawaqqa-u ³an ya-shmul-a l-taqriir-u qtiraaH-an ...
 (And) it is expected that the report will include a proposal ...

8.3 Other idiomatic starters

Some other phrases used to start sentences typically include the following.

8.3.1 Topic shift: *‘ammaa* ... *fa-* فَ ... أَمَا ‘as for ...’

This expression denotes a shift in topic from the previous sentence. It is in two parts, the first word, *‘ammaa*, signaling the new topic, and the second, *fa-*, introducing the comment on that topic. In English, the “as for” phrase is here followed by a comma, which introduces the second part of the sentence, or comment. Therefore *fa-* in this case fills the same function as the punctuation mark in English. Since *‘ammaa* introduces a new sentence and a new topic, the noun following is in the nominative case, as subject of the sentence.

أَمَا الْقِسْمُ الْمُرْجَمُ فَمُتَنَوِّعٌ جَدًّا.
‘ammaa l-qism-u l-mutarjam-u *fa-mutanawwa-‘un* jidd-an.
 As for the translated part, it is very diverse.

أَمَا الْإِسْرَائِيلِيُّونَ ... فَيَقُولُونَ ...
‘ammaa l-israa’iiliyy-uuna ... *fa-ya-quul-uuna* ...
 as for the Israelis, they say ...

أَمَا الْمُخْضَرْمَةُ ، فَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رَابِعَةً.
‘ammaa l-muxaDramat-u, *fa-qad* jaa³-at raabi²-at-an.
 As for the old-timer, she came in fourth.

8.3.2 Addition: *‘ilaa dhaalika* إِلَى ذَلِكَ ‘in addition to that; moreover; furthermore’

This phrase is a shortened version of *bi-l-³iDaafat-i* *‘ilaa dhaalika* ‘in addition to that’:

إِلَى ذَلِكَ أَكَّدَ الصَّحَافِيُّ ...
‘ilaa dhaalika ³akkad-a l-saHaafiyy-u ...
 Moreover, the journalist affirmed ...

إلى ذلك استمرت قوّة الاحتلال في عمليّات ...

‘ilaa dhaalika stamarr-at quwwat-u l-iHtilaal-i fii ‘amaliyyaat-in ...

In addition to that, the occupation forces continued operations ...

8.3.3 Statement of contents: *jaa³-a fii* جاء في / *wa-jaa³-a fii* وجاء في

The expression *jaa³-a fii* ‘it came in’ is an idiomatic way to start a sentence that reveals the contents of a letter, announcement, declaration, or other official document. The English equivalent usually omits this expression and begins with the document itself as the subject of the sentence.

وجاء في البيان أن ...

wa-jaa³-a fii l-bayaan-i ³anna ...

(And) the declaration stated that ...

(‘And it came in the declaration that ...’)

وجاء في نصّ المشروع ...

wa-jaa³-a fii naSS-i l-mashruu³-i ...

And the text of the plan stated that ...

(‘And it came in the text of the plan ...’)

Subordinating conjunctions: the particle *inna* and her sisters

1 Introduction

This group of particles, referred to as *inna wa-axawaat-u-haa* **إِنَّ وَأَخَوَاتُهَا** ‘*inna* and her sisters,’ are part of the class of Arabic words that are referred to as *nawaasix* **نَوَاسِخ**, or words that cause a shift to the accusative case.¹ The members of this particular group are usually used as subordinating conjunctions, connecting two clauses, although *inna* itself may also be used at the beginning of a sentence.

These particles include:²

verily, indeed; that	<i>inna</i>	إِنَّ
that	<i>anna</i>	أَنَّ
but	<i>laakinna</i>	لَكِنَّ
because	<i>li'anna</i>	لِأَنَّ
perhaps	<i>la'alla</i>	لَعَلَّ

1.1 Grammatical effect

These particles have the grammatical effect of making the subject noun in the following clause accusative. If there is no overt subject noun in the clause, a suffix pronoun is affixed to the particle.

¹ For more on the *nawaasix*, see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.8.

Arabic grammars refer to particles that require the accusative as *Huruuf mushabbiha bi-l-fi'l* ‘particles resembling verbs’ because transitive verbs require the accusative on their direct objects. There is therefore a parallel relationship between these two elements; they are both “operators” or “governors” (*awaamil*), and both have similar effects on a following noun or noun phrase. As Angelescu states, “it must not be forgotten that *inna*, as well as other members of the *al-nawaasikh* class, resemble verbs in their capacity to ‘act’ (*amal*), or to govern, according to the Arab grammarians” (1999, 136).

² The subordinating particle *an* is also sometimes considered in this category, although it is different in that it is followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood, rather than a noun in the accusative case. For more on *an* and the subjunctive, see Chapter 34, section 2.3.

1.2 Overt noun subject

When the subject noun in the following clause is overt, it receives the accusative case and usually follows directly after the particle. Note that the form of the accusative case may vary according to the declension of the noun.

إِنَّ الْأَمَالَ تَحَوَّلَتْ إِلَى أَوْهَامٍ.

ʔinna l-ʔaamaal-a taHawwal-at ʔilaa ʔawhaam-in.

(Indeed), the hopes have turned into delusions.

نَعْتَقِدُ أَنَّ الزَّرَاعَةَ لُغَةٌ عَالَمِيَّةٌ.

na-ʔtaqid-u ʔanna l-ziraaʔat-a lughat-un ʔalamiyyat-un.

We believe that agriculture is a world language.

وَلَكِنَّ الْحَاصِلَ عَكْسَ ذَلِكَ

wa-laakinna l-HaaSil-a ʔaks-u dhaalika

but the actuality is the reverse of that

رَغْمَ أَنَّ اتَّجَاهَاتٍ إيجابيةً أَخَذَتْ تَنْبُعَ

raghm-a ʔanna ttijaahaat-in ʔiijaabiyyat-an ʔaxadh-at ta-nbaʔith-u

despite [the fact] that positive trends began to emerge

1.3 Separated subject

The accusative subject noun does not have to be immediately adjacent to the particle – it may be separated from the particle by an adverb or a prepositional phrase. It may not, however, be separated from the subordinating particle by a verb.³

لَكِنَّ هُنَاكَ حَيَوَانَاتٌ أُخْرَى

laakinna hunaaka Hayawaanaat-in ʔuxraa

but there are other animals

لَكِنَّ هُنَاكَ بَعْضُ النُّقُوشِ

laakinna hunaaka baʔD-a l-nuquush-i

but there are some inscriptions

ذَكَرَ أَنَّ لَدَيْهِ الْمُسْتَنْدَاتِ الرَّسْمِيَّةَ.

dhakar-a ʔanna laday-hi l-mustanadaat-i l-rasmiyyat-a.

He mentioned that he has the official documents.

(‘that to-him are the official documents’)

1.4 Reduplicated pronoun subject

If the subject of the subordinated clause is shown only by the inflection of a verb, then a subject pronoun suffix duplicating the subject of the verb is affixed to

³ “The accusative case is not necessarily immediately subsequent to the particle; e.g., it may follow the predicate in a nominal sentence. A verb, however, may never be placed between a particle and the accusative it governs” Cantarino 1975, III:117.

the particle. The subject, whether a noun or a pronoun, must at all times come before its verb in this type of subordinate clause.

إِنَّا نَتَمَنَّى لَكُمْ عِيداً مُبَارَكاً.

^{ʔinna-naa} ^{na-tamannaa} ^{la-kum} ^{ʔiid-an} ^{mubaarak-an}.

(Indeed), we wish you a blessed holiday.

أَدْرَكَ أَنَّهُ نَسِيَ اسْمَهَا.

^{ʔadrak-a} ^{ʔanna-hu} ^{nasiy-a} ^{sm-a-haa}.

He realized that he had forgotten her name.

1.5 Equational clause

If the clause after ^{ʔinna} or one of her sisters is an equational sentence, the subject is a pronoun or a noun in the accusative case, but the predicate (*xabar*) is in the nominative case.

إِنَّهُ ثَقِيلٌ جِداً!

^{ʔinna-hu} ^{thaqiil-un} ^{jidd-an}!

(Indeed,) it is very heavy!

إِنَّ الْمَعْلُومَاتِ خَاطِئَةٌ.

^{ʔinna} ^{l-ma} ^{ʔluumaat-i} ^{xaaTi} ^{ʔat-un}.

(Indeed,) the information is incorrect.

لَا تَهْرِعْ إِلَى السَّلَامِ لِأَنَّهَا مَكَانٌ خَطِرٌ.

^{laa} ^{ta-hra} ^{ʔilaa} ^{l-salaalim-i} ^{li} ^{ʔanna-haa} ^{makaan-un} ^{xaTir-un}.

Don't run to the stairs because they are a dangerous place.

1.6 With invariable pronoun or noun

Sometimes ^{ʔinna} or one of her sisters may be followed by an invariable noun or pronoun, in which case there is no overt accusative marker.⁴

إِنَّ هَذِهِ جَرِيْمَةٌ بِشَعَةٍ.

^{ʔinna} ^{haadhihi} ^{jariimat-un} ^{bashi} ^{ʔat-un}.

(Indeed,) this is a repugnant crime.

لَكِنْ هَذَا لَا يَكْفِي.

^{laakinna} ^{haadhaa} ^{laa} ^{ya-kfii}.

But this is not enough.

1.7 With buffer pronoun: *Damiir al-sha'n* ضمير الشأن

Occasionally in MSA a subordinate clause may be preceded by a */-hu/* pronoun after the subordinating particle (e.g., ^{ʔanna-hu} إِنَّهُ) that does not seem to be necessary or even to agree with the subject of the verb. This pronoun refers not to the subject of the clause, but to the entire clause itself, and acts as a generic “buffer” between the subordinating particle and the following clause. In Arabic this particular use of the suffix pronoun is called *Damiir al-sha'n* ‘the pronoun of the fact’ or “pronoun which anticipates a whole subsequent clause.”⁵

⁴ According to traditional Arabic grammatical theory, the accusative marking is there in a “virtual” sense (*muqaddar*), even though it does not appear on the word.

⁵ Definition from Cachia 1973, 57. See also Cantarino 1975, II:430–31.

كَأَنَّهُ لَا تَوْجِدَ خِلَافَاتَ بَيْنِنَا

ka-anna-hu laa tuujad-u xilaafaat-un bayn-a-naa
as though there were no differences between us

2 The particles

2.1 Sentence-initial *inna* 'إِنَّ: 'indeed, truly, verily'

The particle *inna* has a truth-intensifying function when used at the beginning of a statement. It emphasizes that what follows is true. More frequently used in Classical Arabic than MSA, it nonetheless occurs occasionally in MSA, especially when reporting an official speech.⁶

إِنَّ الْأَمَالَ تَحَوَّلَتْ إِلَى أَوْهَامٍ.

inna l-aamaal-a taHawwal-at ilaa awhaam-in.
(Indeed,) hopes have turned into delusions.

إِنِّي أُؤَكِّدُ أَنْ ...

inna-nii u'akkid-u anna ...
(Indeed,) I affirm that ...

إِنَّنَا جَمِيعًا نَعْمَلُ مِنْ أَجْلِ السَّلَامِ.

inna-naa jamii-an na-mal-u min ajl-i l-salaam-i.
Indeed, we are working all together on behalf of peace.

2.2 Subordinating *inna* 'that'

The particle *inna* is also used as a way of introducing reported speech. As a subordinating conjunction, it is used exclusively after the verb *qaal-a* 'to say'.⁷

وَقَالَ إِنَّهُ نَاقَشَ هَذَا الْمَوْضُوعَ.

wa-qaal-a inna-hu naaqash-a haadha l-mawDuu-a.
He said that he had discussed this topic.

قَالَ الْمُدَرِّبُ إِنَّهُ رَاضٍ.

qaal-a l-mudarrib-u inna-hu raaD-in.
The coach said that he was satisfied.

قَالَ إِنَّ السِّيَاسِيِّينَ يَسْتَخْدُمُونَ مُصْطَلَحَاتَ دِينِيَّةٍ.

qaal-a inna l-siyaasiyy-iina ya-staxdim-uuna muSTalaHaat-in diiniyyat-an.
He said that the politicians use religious terminology.

2.3 *anna* 'أَنَّ 'that'

The particle *anna* is used to report factual information in a subordinate clause. It is used with the meaning of 'that' after perception verbs such as *sami-a* 'hear,'

⁶ Dahlgren, in his study of Arabic word order, reports that *inna* is "a particle for marking the thematization of (mainly or exclusively) the subject by letting it precede the verb in the sentence" (1998, 217).

⁷ Note that in English the word "that" may be omitted in reporting speech, but *inna* may not be omitted in Arabic.

i'taqad-a, *iftakara-a* 'think' or 'believe,' and also with verbs of communicating such as *dhakar-a* 'mention,' *'akkad-a* 'assert, declare', or *'a^clan-a* 'announce.'⁸ Belnap in his study of complementation in MSA states that "*'anna* occurs with verbs that assume or claim that the following clause's assertion is statement of fact."⁹

The verb in the main clause is referred to in some studies as the "matrix" verb because it determines the nature of the complementizer or subordinating particle that follows it (whether it is *'anna* or *'an*).¹⁰ Note that if the matrix verb requires a preposition, *'anna* follows the preposition.

لا أَظَنَّ أَنَّ المسرحيات كانت رديئة.

laa 'a-Zann-u 'anna l-masraHiyaat-i kaan-at radii'at-an.

I do not think that the plays were bad.

ذكر أَنَّ العربَ أعطوها اسمها.

dhakar-a 'anna l-'arab-a 'a^cTaw-haa sm-a-haa.

He mentioned that the Arabs gave it its name.

ذكر أَنَّ هناك سياسياً مشهوراً . . .

dhakar-a 'anna hunaaka siyaasiyy-an mashuur-an . . .

he mentioned that there is a famous politician . . .

وصفوه بأنَّه جوٌّ من الثقة.

waSaf-uu-hu bi-'anna-hu jaww-un min-a l-thiqat-i.

They described it as being ('that it is') an atmosphere of trust.

وتشير مصادر كردية إلى أَنَّ العددَ الحقيقيَّ قد يصل إلى ألف شخص.

wa-tushiir-u maSaadir-u kurdiyyat-un 'ilaa 'anna l-'adad-a l-Haqiiqiyy-a qad ya-Sil-u 'ilaa 'alf-i shaxS-in.

Kurdish sources indicate that the true number may reach a thousand persons.

لقد أردنا أن نثبت للجميع أننا فريق جيد.

la-qad 'arad-naa 'an nu-thbit-a li-l-jamii^c-i 'anna-naa fariiq-un jayyid-un.

We (indeed) wanted to prove to everyone that we are a good team.

⁸ Note that *'anna* (+ noun in the accusative) and *'an* (+ verb in the subjunctive) are related particles which differ in their distribution. According to LeComte (1968, 120), "la subordination complétive s'exprime avec *'an* ou *'anna* (que) qui ne sont que deux formes de la même particule. Elles se distinguent toutefois par leur emploi syntaxique: *'an* entraîne normalement un verbe à l'inacc. subj. (subjunctive) . . . *'anna* ne peut être suivie que d'un nom au cas direct ou d'un pronom affixe." See also Chapter 34, section 2.3.

⁹ In a personal communication to the author, summarizing his findings in Belnap 1986. Note that matrix verbs indicating attitudes such as intention, feeling, possibility, need, or desire are followed by the subordinating particle *'an* plus a subjunctive verb, not by *'anna*. See Angheliescu 1999, 138 on *'anna*, especially as compared with *'an*; and Cantarino 1975, II: 234–35 and III:106–107.

¹⁰ See Persson 1999 for a study of matrix verbs and complement clauses in Arabic.

2.3.1 *ka-anna* كَأَنَّ ‘as though’

The preposition *ka-* may be prefixed to the subordinating conjunction *inna* ‘that’ in order to form the expression “as though.” This expression is still a sister of *inna* and has the same effect on the following clause.

وَكأَنَّنا متَّفَقونَ في الواقعِ على كلِّ شيءٍ
wa ka-anna-naa muttafiq-uuna fii l-waaqi-i ‘alaa kull-i shay’in
 as though we actually agreed on everything

كَأَنه مدرِّج رومانيٌّ
ka-anna-hu mudarraaj-un ruumaaniyy-un
 as though it were a Roman amphitheater

2.4 *laakinna* ‘but’

This particle introduces a clause that contrasts with the previous clause.

ليست لبنانية، ولكنَّها سعدت في لبنان.
lays-at lubnaaniyyat-an, wa-laakinna-haa sa‘id-at fii lubnaan-a.
 She is not Lebanese, but she was happy in Lebanon.

لكنَّ هذه المساجدَ محتلَّةٌ	ولكنَّ التجربةَ تقلقني
<i>laakinna haadhihi l-masaajid-a muHtallat-un</i>	<i>wa-laakinna l-tajribat-a tu-qliq-u-nii</i>
but these mosques are occupied	but the experiment disturbs me

لكنَّ البرنامجَ يبقى في الكمبيوتر
laakinna l-barnaamaj-a ya-bqaa fii l-kumbyuutir
 but the program remains in the computer

2.4.1 *laakin* لكن / *wa-laakin* ولكن ‘but’

This variant of *laakinna*, written without the *shadda* or *fatHa* on the *nuun*, is not a sister of *inna* and can therefore be followed directly by a verb. It is not as frequent in written Arabic as *laakinna*. In written text, it is almost impossible to tell the difference between these two particles, except that *laakin* may be followed by a verb.

ولكنَّ يجب وضع ضوابط ومراقبة
wa-laakin ya-jib-u waD‘-u DawaabiT-a wa-muraaqabat-in
 but it is necessary to put [into effect] regulations and surveillance

2.5 *li-anna* لَأَنَّ ‘because’

This subordinating particle is followed by a clause that gives a rationale or reason.

لأنَّها استحقاق ديمقراطيٌّ	لأنَّها تتحدَّث عن همومي
<i>li-anna-haa stiHqaaq-un</i>	<i>li-anna-haa ta-taHaddath-u ‘an</i>
<i>diimuugraaTiyy-un</i>	<i>humuum-ii</i>
because it is a democratic right	because she speaks about my concerns

لأنَّ السنتين الأخيرتين كانتا من أفضل السنوات

li-ʿanna l-sanat-ayni l-ʾaxiirat-ayni kaan-ataa min ʾafDal-i l-sanawaat-i

because the last two years were among the best years

2.6 *laʿalla* وَلَعَلَّ / *wa-laʿalla* وَلَعَلَّ ‘perhaps, maybe’

This particle is similar in meaning to *rubba-maa* ‘perhaps,’ but is a sister of *ʿinna*.

Like *ʿinna*, it may start a sentence as well as a clause. If it is followed by a verbal sentence, the subject of the verb must reduplicate itself in the form of a pronoun prefix attached to *laʿalla*. Abboud and McCarus state that *laʿalla* “often has the implication of hopeful expectation” (1983, Part 1:519).

ولعلنا رأينا فعلاً أول عناصر مخطّة.

wa-laʿalla-naa raʾay-naa fiʾl-an ʾawwal-a ʿanaaSir-i muxaTTat-in.

Perhaps we have really seen the first elements of a plan.

ولعله مات قبل ذلك.

wa-laʿalla-hu maat-a qabl-a dhaalika.

Perhaps he died before that.

ولعلّ ذلك يعود إلى أن أغلبهم أجنبي.

wa-laʿalla dhaalika ya-ʿuud-u ʾilaa ʿanna ʾaghlab-a-hum ʾajaanib-u.

Perhaps that is because (‘goes back to that’) the majority of them are foreigners.

Verb classes

Arabic verbs fall into two major groups, those with three-consonant roots (triliteral) and those with four-consonant roots (quadriliteral). Around each lexical root is structured a set of possible stem classes or verb forms (normally ten for triliteral roots and four for quadriliteral).¹ Moreover, each Arabic verb has a corresponding verbal noun (*maSdar* مصدر), an active participle (*ism faa'il* اسم فاعل), and often, a passive participle (*ism maf'uul* اسم مفعول). Thus verbs and their derivatives form the foundation for substantial amounts of Arabic vocabulary and can be considered in some ways as the core of the Arabic lexicon.²

1 Verb roots

Every Arabic verb has a lexical root, that is, a set of consonants or phonemes in a specific order that embody a broad lexical meaning, such as *k-t-b* 'write'; *h-n-d-s* 'engineer'; *d-r-s* 'study'; *'-l-m* 'know'. These roots may consist of three or four consonants, with three being the most common. Within these two different root types, there are phonological variations according to the nature of the consonant phonemes occurring in the root.

This is mainly to do with the fact that the semivowels /w/ (*waaw*) and /y/ (*yaa'*) are not full-fledged consonants; they are weak in the sense that there are restrictions on how they combine with and interact with vowels. Sometimes when these semi-consonants are root phonemes, they behave as regular consonants, sometimes, however, they shift into long vowels, or they may become short vowels, or they turn into *hamza*, or in some cases, they disappear altogether. This can be confusing when learners need to identify the consonantal root of a word in order to look it up in a dictionary, so it is important for learners to have a basic understanding of how root types interact with rules for word formation.

¹ These stem classes are sometimes referred to in current literature on morphological theory as *binyanim* (singular *binyan*), using the Hebrew term. See Aronoff 1994, especially Chapter 5: 123–164. Note also that there are in fact fifteen (rather than ten) potential verb forms for triliteral verb roots. But Forms XI–XV are rare in MSA. For more on Forms XI–XV see Chapter 32.

² Kouloughli (1994, 215) gives the following description of the “deverbal” derivatives: “Tout verbe a dans son sillage des formes déverbaux qui lui sont associées et avec lesquelles il entretient des relations morphologiques, syntaxiques et sémantiques stables.”

There are phonotactic rules — rules of sound distribution — for Arabic words, many of which were deduced by Arabic grammarians as long ago as the eighth century (AD), and which remain valid today for MSA.³ Whenever possible here, these rules are described and applied in order to explain variations in word structure.

Arabic verb roots are classified into two major classes: *SaHiiH* ‘sound’ and *mu‘tall* ‘weak.’ Sound roots are ones that do not contain either *waaw* or *yaa*’; “weak” roots contain *waaw* or *yaa*’ as one or more of the root phonemes. It is essential to know these classes because verb inflection affects the phonological structure of the verb root in all cases except the regular or sound trilateral root.

Within the two major classes of verbal roots, further classification occurs in several subcategories. Each of the subcategories manifests particular variation in the root. This variation is rule-governed, but complex.⁴

1.1 Regular (sound) trilateral root (*al-fi‘l al-SaHiiH al-saalim* الفعل الصحيح السالم)

Sound or regular verbal roots consist of three consonants, all of which are different and none of which are *waaw*, *yaa*’, or *hamza*. For example:

General meaning	Root consonants	
hear	<i>s-m-‘</i>	س - م - ع
reveal	<i>k-sh-f</i>	ك - ش - ف
work	<i>‘-m-l</i>	ع - م - ل

1.2 Geminate verb root (*al-fi‘l al-muDa‘‘af* الفعل المضعف)

Geminate or doubled verbal roots are ones where the second and third consonant of the root are the same. They show an alternation between repetition of the geminate consonant, with a vowel between, and doubling of the consonant, under specific phonological conditions.⁵

respond, reply	<i>r-d-d</i>	ر - د - د
cause	<i>s-b-b</i>	س - ب - ب
solve	<i>H-l-l</i>	ح - ل - ل

³ Al-Khalil ibn Ahmad (d. ca. 791) pioneered Arabic phonological theory and developed the theory of root phonotactics in his introduction to the first Arabic dictionary, the *Kitaab al-‘ayn*. For more on this, see Sara 1991.

⁴ See Killeen 1978 for mnemonic aids to weak verb inflection and Timothy Mitchell 1981 for description of phonological rules in hollow and defective verbs. Extensive and useful descriptions of the morphophonemic rules for geminate, assimilated, hollow, and defective verbs are found in Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2: 1-173.

⁵ For an analysis of the nature of geminate root morphology, see Moore 1990.

1.3 Hamzated verb root (*al-fiʿl al-mahmuuz* الفعل المهموز)

A hamzated verb root is one where *hamza* (the glottal stop) occurs as the first, second, or third consonant. These verbs are considered a separate category because of morphophonemic rules that govern the occurrence and distribution of *hamza*, and also because of *hamza* spelling rules.

take	^o x-dh	ء - خ - ذ
eat	^o k-l	ء - ك - ل
ask	s- ^o l	س - أ - ل
begin	b-d- ^o	ب - د - أ
read	q-r- ^o	ق - ر - ء

1.4 Roots with semi-consonants

1.4.1 Assimilated verb root (*al-fiʿl al-mithaal* الفعل المثال)

“Assimilated” verb roots begin with a semi-consonant (*waaw* or *yaaʿ*), most often *waaw*. They are termed “assimilated” because this *waaw*, even though it is part of the root, often disappears in the present tense and in certain other situations.

arrive	w-S-l	و - ص - ل
be abundant	w-f-r	و - ف - ر
find	w-j-d	و - ج - د
be dry	y-b-s	ي - ب - س

1.4.2 Hollow verb root (*al-fiʿl al-ʿajwaf* الفعل الأجوف)

“Hollow” verbs are ones in which the second or middle root consonant is either *waaw* or *yaaʿ*. These two consonants undergo various mutations, turning into ^o*alif*, a short vowel, a *hamza*, or a long vowel depending on the word structure. In the past tense citation form, for example, the *waaw* or *yaaʿ* is not present and is replaced by ^o*alif*. However, to look up one of these words or its derivation in a dictionary, one must know what the middle root consonant is. The root consonant often recurs in the present tense verb stem (as a vowel) and elsewhere, as will be shown. There are essentially three variations on the hollow verb, determined by which long vowel is present in the present-tense or imperfective stem: *waaw*, *yaaʿ* or ^o*alif*.

say	q-w-l	ق - و - ل
be	k-w-n	ك - و - ن
sell	b-y- ^e	ب - ي - ع
live	^e -y-sh	ع - ي - ش

1.4.3 Defective verb root (*al-fiʿl al-naaqiS* الفعل الناقص)

“Defective” verb roots are ones where the final consonant is either *waaw* or *yaaʾ*. These semi-consonants may assume various forms and even seem to disappear in certain circumstances.

be sufficient	<i>k-f-y</i>	ك - ف - ي
forget	<i>n-s-y</i>	ن - س - ي
complain	<i>sh-k-w</i>	ش - ك - و
appear	<i>b-d-w</i>	ب - د - و
build	<i>b-n-y</i>	ب - ن - ي

1.4.4 Doubly weak or “mixed” verb roots

Doubly weak verb roots have semi-consonants and/or *hamza* in two places, sometimes as the first and third consonants, and sometimes as the second and third. They are not many in number, but some of them are frequently used:

come	<i>j-y-ʾ</i>	ج - ي - ء
come	<i>ʾ-t-y</i>	ء - ت - ي
see	<i>r-ʾ-y</i>	ر - ء - ي
follow	<i>w-l-y</i>	و - ل - ي
intend	<i>n-w-y</i>	ن - و - ي

1.5 Quadriliteral verb root (*al-fiʿl al-rubaaʿiyy* الفعل الرباعي)

Quadriliteral verb roots contain four consonants. Sometimes the four consonants are all different and sometimes they are reduplicated, that is, the first two consonants are repeated. Reduplicated quadriliteral roots are often considered to be onomatopoeic, that is, derived from particular sounds or repeated motions.

crystalize	<i>b-l-w-r</i>	ب - ل - و - ر
dominate	<i>s-y-T-r</i>	س - ي - ط - ر
obstruct	<i>ʿ-r-q-l</i>	ع - ر - ق - ل
flutter	<i>r-f-r-f</i>	ر - ف - ر - ف
whisper	<i>w-s-w-s</i>	و - س - و - س
hum	<i>h-m-h-m</i>	ه - م - ه - م
shake, quake	<i>z-l-z-l</i>	ز - ل - ز - ل

1.6 Denominal verb roots

Normally, the verb is considered the most basic or elemental form of a lexical entry, but in a few instances, the verb is ultimately derived from a noun, and sometimes the concept is borrowed from another language. These denominals tend to exist chiefly in Forms II and V and rarely in other forms. They can be trilateral or quadrilateral. Some examples of denominal verbs include:

Form II:

to unite	<i>waHHada</i>	وَحَّدَ	<i>w-H-d</i>	و - ح - د
to appoint	<i>‘ayyana</i>	عَيَّنَ	<i>‘-y-n</i>	ع - ي - ن

Form V:

to adopt	<i>tabannaa</i>	تَبَنَّى	<i>b-n</i>	ب - ن
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Form II quadrilateral:

to center	<i>tamarkaza</i>	تَمَرَّكَزَ	<i>m-r-k-z</i> ⁶	م - ر - ك - ز
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2 Verb derivation patterns: *‘awzaan al-fi’l* أوزان الفعل

2.1 Comparison with English

In English, it is possible to modify verb meanings or even create verbs from other parts of speech through several morphological procedures, for example, prefixing the morpheme /un-/ as in *undo*, *unfasten*, *unlock*, *unpack*, indicating the reversal of an action. Nouns and adjectives can be converted into verbs by adding the suffix /-en/, as in *strengthen* or *widen* indicating an increase of that quality. Or one can, for example, create verbs by using the suffix /-ize/ as in *standardize*, *mechanize*, *minimize*, *maximize*, *formalize*, or *trivialize*, to indicate the act of adding that quality to something. And there are many more such procedures. Other parts of speech, such as prepositions, adverbs, and nouns are converted to verbs just by inflecting them as verbs: “to *down* a glass of water,” “to *up* the price,” “to *impact* a situation.”

Arabic verb derivation is much more restricted; Arabic verbs fall into a limited number of stem classes. It is much rarer for new verbs to be created in Modern Standard Arabic than in English because each Arabic verb belongs to a particular derivational and inflectional class. That is, it has a particular internal shape, or pattern.

⁶ In this instance, the word *markaz*, ‘center,’ a noun of place from the trilateral root *r-k-z*, has taken on such a lexical identity of its own that a denominal verb form has emerged based on the four consonants, *m-r-k-z*.

2.2 The ten-form template: *ʾafʿaal mujarrada wa-ʾafʿaal maziida*

أفعال مجردة وأفعال مزیدة

Arabic has a verb grid, or template of ten derived “forms” into which any trilateral verb root may theoretically fit.⁷ That is, the lexical root of three consonants can theoretically interlock with ten different patterns to produce ten lexical variants on the same root. These variants all have a central, related lexical meaning, but each verb form has a different semantic slant on that meaning. For example, different forms of the lexical root *ʿ-l-m* produce verbs having to do with knowledge: Form I *ʿalim-a* means ‘to know, to be informed’ Form II *ʿallam-a* means ‘to teach’ (cause someone to know), Form IV *ʿaʿlama* means ‘to inform’ (cause someone to be informed), Form V *taʿallama* means ‘to learn, to study’ (cause one’s self to know). The triconsonantal sequence *ʿ-l-m* is common to all these lexical items.

The base form, or Form I is referred to in Arabic as *fiʿl mujarrad* فعل مجرد, literally the ‘stripped’ form; meaning the morphologically simplest form. All other forms (II–X) are referred to as *ʾafʿaal maziida* أفعال مزیدة, literally, ‘increased’ or ‘augmented’ forms, i.e., more morphologically complex.

In practice, not every lexical root occurs in all ten forms of the verb; some occur in very few forms, while others occur in four, five, or six forms. Dictionaries normally list all the forms in which a lexical root regularly appears.

The interlocking of the lexical root with the various verb form templates creates actual verbs whose meanings can often be analyzed or deduced through the use of compositional semantics. That is, the lexical meaning of the consonantal root plus the grammatical meaning of the particular template combine to yield an actual word. This two-part formula sometimes yields a very clear meaning derivable from the component parts, but other times, the meaning is not as clear because of its evolution over time.⁸

Quadriliteral verbs have a more restricted grid of four possible templates or forms into which they fall.

⁷ As mentioned in note 1, there are a possible five more forms, XI–XV, but they are much rarer.

⁸ As a concise summary of the interrelationships of the Arabic verb forms, Lecomte (1968, 34) writes: “Si l’on met à part la forme dérivée IX, qui est nettement en marge du système, et la forme VII, commune à tout le domaine sémitique et de constitution claire, on peut expliquer comme suit la formation des autres formes dérivées: les formes I, II, III et IV sont les quatre formes de base, auxquelles correspondent respectivement les formes VIII, V, VI et X, obtenues en principe par préfixation d’un *t* , qui leur confère une valeur réfléchie-passive. Le principe est appliqué sans altération dans les formes dérivées V et VI. Dans la forme dérivée VIII, on observe une métathèse immédiatement perceptible. La forme dérivée X est issue non de la forme dérivée IV à préfixe *hamza*, mais d’une forme dérivée IV à préfixe *s-* qui a existé dans d’autres langues sémitiques (ex. assyrien tardif).”

2.2.1 Conventions

2.2.1.1 FORMS AND MEASURES (أوزان *ʿawzaan*): The derivations or verb templates are identified by the morphological pattern that characterizes them and are often referred to in western grammars of Arabic as “forms” or “measures” of the verb. They are usually identified in English by a roman numeral, i.e., Form II or Form VI. In this convention, when the word “form” refers to a specific verb template, it is capitalized, e.g., Form II. Since this is a widespread convention in the United States and Europe, and because it is the way that verbs are identified in the most widely used Arabic-English dictionary, Hans Wehr’s *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, it is used in this reference grammar.

Arabic grammars term the verb forms *ʿawzaan* ‘weights’ or ‘measures’ (sg. *wazn* وزن), and refer to them via the medium of a model root (traditionally *f-ʿ-l* فعل) keyed into particular morphological patterns. The base form is *mujarrad* ‘stripped, bare’ and the derived forms are *maziid* ‘augmented’ on the model of a particular pattern, for example,

«انتخب» على وزن افتعل

“*intaxab*” *ʿalaa wazn-i ftaʿal*;

i.e., *intaxab* ‘he elected’ is on the model of *iftaʿal*;

«تجنب» على وزن تفعل

“*tajannab*” *ʿalaa wazn-i tafaʿal*;

tajannab ‘he avoided’ is on the model of *tafaʿal*.

2.2.1.2 CITATION FORM FOR VERBS: The conventional way of citing Arabic verbal roots is to refer to them using the shortest verb inflection, **the third person masculine singular, past tense**. This is considered equivalent to using the English citation form, the infinitive (there is no infinitive verb form in Arabic⁹). It is helpful to cite the verb in its past and present forms together, and that is how they are presented in this book. For example:

to discuss	<i>baHath-a/ya-bHath-u</i>	بَحَثَ / يَبْحَثُ
to reveal	<i>kashaf-a/ya-kshif-u</i>	كَشَفَ / يَكْشِفُ

⁹ The verbal noun, or *maSdar*, is considered equivalent to the infinitive for several reasons: first, it is an abstraction of the action of a verb, and second, it does not possess a time reference (i.e., tense marking) and is therefore non-finite. Moreover, in certain syntactic constructions it functions as an infinitive does in English. However, it is not used as a citation form for the verb.

2.3 The model root: *f-ʿ-l* (*faaʾ - ʿayn - laam* ف - ع - ل)

In order to exemplify patterns or prosodic templates in Arabic, a **model root** *f-ʿ-l* is used so that any pattern can be referred to or expressed by fitting into it.¹⁰ This procedure was established centuries ago when Arabic grammarians first started extracting and analyzing the rules and structures of the language, and it is still the practice today. Any initial root consonant is represented by *faaʾ*, any medial consonant by *ʿayn*, and any final root consonant by *laam*.¹¹ The Form IV verb *ʾarsala* ('to send') would be said to be on the pattern of *ʾafʿala* (*ʿalaa wazn ʾafʿal-a* (على وزن أفعل); the verb *katab-a* ('to write') is on the pattern of *faʿal-a* (*ʿalaa wazn faʿal-a* (على وزن فاعل), and so forth.

If a root or stem has four consonants instead of three, then another *laam* is added to illustrate the pattern. Thus the verb *tarjam-a* ('to translate') would be said to be on the pattern of *faʿlal-a* (*ʿalaa wazn faʿlal-a* (على وزن فاعلل).

The use of the root *f-ʿ-l* as the prime exemplar for all Arabic words is a powerful symbolic formalization that provides a model of any morphological template or word pattern. This procedure is used not only to refer to verb forms but also to refer to any lexical item based on the root and pattern system. It is an efficient way of illustrating paradigmatic contrasts, and in keeping with this practice, this reference grammar uses the root *f-ʿ-l* for points of reference and examples.

2.4 Morphological shifts

When a non-sound root interlocks with a particular pattern, a situation arises where rules of phonology intersect and may clash with rules of morphology, so a modification of the word-structure occurs. When this happens, the rules of phonology are primary. These instances result, therefore, in what are called morphophonemic processes, i.e., rule-governed changes in word structure. These rules generate particular inflectional classes (e.g., Form VIII hollow verbs) which are illustrated in paradigms.

Although it may seem that there are many exceptions to rules in Arabic, the fact is that Arabic phonological structure and rules of phonotactics are primary, and they determine the sequences of morphological alternations that occur. The phonological rules of Arabic and how they interact with the morphology result in morphological structures of Arabic being coherent and rule-governed.

¹⁰ The lexical root *f-ʿ-l* has the base meaning of 'doing' or 'making.'

¹¹ The letters/phonemes of the model root are referred to in Arabic as *Huruuf al-miizaan al-Sarfiyy* 'the letters of the morphological measure.' As described by Abd al-Latif et al., "*bi-Hayth-u ta-kuun-a haad-hihi l-Huruuf-u l-thalaathat-u mushakkalat-an bi-Harakaat-i ʾaHruf-i l-kalimat-i l-muraad-i wazn-u-haa wazn-an Sarfiyy-an*" (1997, 141). "In order that these three letters be vowelized with the vowels of the word whose pattern is desired."

This reference grammar defines and describes some basic MSA morphophonemic processes in order to make clear the systematization in the language. However, learners who would prefer to focus on forms rather than rules can consult the paradigms without examining the morphophonemic processes.

2.5 The verb forms: patterns, meanings, deverbal substantives

Verb patterns are traditionally given in their citation forms, the third person masculine singular active past tense, as well as the third person masculine singular present tense. This is a standard procedure for citing Arabic verbs, since there is a stem change between past and present tense.

It is traditional to refer to the short vowel which follows the second root consonant of a verb as the “**stem**” **vowel**. Therefore in a present tense verb such as *ya-rfuD-u* ‘he refuses,’ the stem vowel is *Damma*. In a derived verb form such as Form VIII *ya-HtafiZ-u* ‘he maintains,’ the stem vowel is *kasra*.

Verb citations are provided in Arabic script and in transcription; for discussion of consonant–vowel patterning, consonant-vowel structures are also sometimes given, using the convention:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| C = Consonant; | V = short vowel |
| C ₁ represents the first root consonant, | VV = long vowel |
| C ₂ represents the second and | |
| C ₃ represents the third. | |
| C ₄ represents the fourth consonant (if any) | |

In the following chapters, each verb form is described, with its particular patterns and meanings. Inflectional characteristics are noted, and examples are provided.

As mentioned at the start of this section, each verb form has in its wake a set of three deverbal substantives: a **verbal noun** (the name of the action, e.g., ‘defense,’ or ‘defending’), an **active participle** (describing the doer of the action: ‘defender’ or ‘[person] defending’) and a **passive participle** (describing the item which undergoes the action, e.g., ‘defended’). Whereas the verbal noun is used strictly as a noun, the participles, being descriptors, may function either as nouns or as adjectives. Different sections of this book describe the form and function of verbal nouns and participles, but because they form such an integral part of the lexical repository of each verb, they are also listed in the context of their deverbal derivations.

Verb inflection: a summary

1 Verb inflection

Arabic verbs inflect for six morphological categories: gender, number, person, tense, mood, and voice. These inflections are marked by means of prefixes, suffixes, changes in vowel pattern, and stem changes. The first three categories, gender, number, and person, are determined by the subject of the verb. That is, the verb agrees with the subject in all those respects.

1.1 Agreement markers: gender, number, and person

Agreement markers ensure that the verb inflects in accordance with the nature of its subject. Arabic verbs inflect by means of **affixes** attached to a verb stem. In the past tense, the inflectional marker is a **suffix** that carries all the agreement markers: gender, number, and person. For example: the suffix */-at/* on a past tense stem such as *katab-* (*katab-at* كَتَبَتْ) carries the information: third person, feminine, singular: i.e., “she wrote.”

In the present tense, the verb stem has a **prefix** as well as a suffix. For example, **prefix** *ya-* on a present tense stem such as *-ktub-* carries partial information: third person. The **suffix** on the present tense stem carries more information: therefore the suffix *-uuna* (as in *ya-ktub-uuna* يَكْتُبُونَ ‘they write’) gives information on number (plural) and gender (masculine), as well as mood (indicative). This combination of information is uniquely marked on each member in a verb paradigm.¹

1.1.1 Gender: masculine or feminine

Arabic verbs are marked for masculine or feminine gender in the second and third persons. The first person (I, we) is gender-neutral.

¹ In technical linguistic terms, Arabic is a “pro-drop” (i.e., “pronoun-drop”) language. That is, every inflection in a verb paradigm is specified uniquely and does not need to use independent pronouns to differentiate the person, number, and gender of the verb. For Modern Standard Arabic that means that there are thirteen different inflections in every verb paradigm. Consult Haegeman 1994, 19–25 and 454–57 for more on pro-drop languages and the pro-drop parameter in general.

1.1.2 Number: singular, dual, plural

Arabic verbs are inflected for three number categories: singular, dual, or plural. The dual in Arabic verbs is used in the second person (“you two”) and in the third person (“they two”), but not the first person.

1.1.3 Person: first, second, third

The concept of “person” refers to the individual/s involved in the speech act: the one/s speaking (first person), the one/s spoken to (second person), and one/s spoken about (third person). Arabic verbs inflect for: first person (I, we), second person (you), and third person (she, he, they).

1.2 Tense

The two basic Arabic verb tenses differ in terms of stems as well as inflectional markers.

1.2.1 Verb stems

Each Arabic verb has two stems, one used for the perfect/past tense and one for the imperfect/present. The past tense stem takes suffixes in order to inflect, and the present tense stem takes both prefixes and suffixes. Because of the salience of the prefix in the present tense and of the suffix in the past tense, certain scholars refer to these tenses as “the prefix set” and “the suffix set,” respectively.²

In Form I verbs, the present tense inflectional stem is not usually predictable from the past tense stem, but in the derived forms and quadriliteral verbs, the present stem is *predictable*. In this text, stems are usually written with a hyphen where they would connect with inflectional formatives,³ e.g.

	Past tense stem		Present tense stem	
write	<i>katab-</i>	كتب	<i>-ktub-</i>	كتب
complete	<i>ʾakmal-</i>	أكمل	<i>-kmil-</i>	كمل
meet	<i>ijtima^c-</i>	اجتمع	<i>-jtami^c-</i>	جتمع
use	<i>istaxdam-</i>	استخدم	<i>-staxdim-</i>	ستخدم

1.2.2 Tense/Aspect

Arabic verbs show a range of tenses, but two of them are basic: **past** and **present**. These tenses are also often referred to as **perfect** and **imperfect**, or **perfective** and

² For example, see Holes 1995, 86–90 and Beeston 1970, 71–86.

³ Where the prefix or suffix merges with the verb stem (as in the past tense of defective verbs or the present tense of passive assimilated verbs) the morpheme boundary is blurred and therefore not indicated.

imperfective, but those latter terms are more accurately labels of aspect rather than tense.

Tense and aspect can be described as two different ways of looking at time. Tense usually deals with linear points in time that stretch from the far past into the future, in relation to the speaker. Aspect, on the other hand deals with the degree of completeness of an action or state: is the action completed, partial, ongoing, or yet to occur? So the perspectives of tense and aspect are different: tense focuses on the point on the timeline at which the action occurs, whereas aspect is focused on the action itself – whether it is complete or not.⁴

The difference between tense and aspect can be subtle, and the two categories may overlap to a significant extent. It is theorized that Classical Arabic was more aspect-specific than tense-specific, but in dealing with the modern written language, some linguists and teachers find it more pragmatic to describe Arabic verbs in terms of tense.⁵

In this work, I often use the term “past tense” to refer to what is also called the perfect, or the perfective aspect; and I use the term “present tense” to refer to what is also called the imperfect tense or the imperfective aspect. In general, I prefer to stick with timeline terms (“past” and “present”) when using the term “tense” because I have found this to be less confusing to learners.⁶

⁴ “Tense involves the basic location in time of an event or state of affairs, in relation to the time of speaking (or writing), while aspect relates more to the internal nature of events and states of affairs, such as whether they are (or were) finished, long-lasting, instantaneous, repetitive, the beginning of something, the end of something, and so on” (Hurford 1994, 240). Abboud and McCarus use the terms “perfect tense” and “imperfect tense” (1983, part 1:263): “The perfect tense denotes completed actions; the imperfect tense denotes actions which have not taken place or have not been completed.”

Likewise, Haywood and Nahmad state (1962, 95–96): “Arabic, in common with other Semitic languages, is deficient in tenses, and this does not make for ease in learning. Moreover the tenses do not have accurate time-significances as in Indo-European languages. There are two main tenses, the Perfect الماضي *al-maaDii*, denoting actions completed at the time to which reference is being made; and the Imperfect المضارع *al-muDaari*, for incompleting actions.”

⁵ For a thorough and lucid discussion of Arabic verb aspect and tense see Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 245–56. More concisely, Wright states the following: “A Semitic Perfect or Imperfect has, in and of itself, no reference to the temporal relations of the speaker (thinker or writer) and of other actions which are brought into juxtaposition with it. It is precisely these relations which determine in what sphere of time (past, present, or future) a Semitic Perfect or Imperfect lies, and by which of our tenses it is to be expressed – whether by our Past, Perfect, Pluperfect, or Future-perfect; by our Present, Imperfect, or Future. The Arabian Grammarians themselves have not, however, succeeded in keeping this important point distinctly in view, but have given an undue importance to the idea of time” (1967, I:51).

⁶ The terms “perfect” and “imperfect” are sometimes misleading for English-speaking learners of Arabic because they often compare the terms to European languages they have studied, such as French, for example, where “*imparfait*” refers to a continuing state or action in the past. Note the definition of “imperfect” in Webster’s Third (unabridged: 1986, q.v.): “of or relating to or being a verb tense used to designate a continuing state or action *esp. in the past*” (my italics).

1.2.3 The present tense (the imperfect): *al-muDaari*^c المضارع

1.2.3.1 FORM: The present tense is formed from the present tense stem of a verb, to which both a prefix and a suffix are added. The stem by itself is not an independent word; it needs the prefixes and suffixes to convey a complete meaning. The prefixes are subject markers of person while the suffixes show mood and number.⁷ In MSA, thirteen present tense inflectional forms are used.

Present tense stem -ktub- 'write' Present tense indicative conjugation			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَكْتُبُ <i>a-ktub-u</i>		نَكْتُبُ <i>na-ktub-u</i>
Second person m.	تَكْتُبُ <i>ta-ktub-u</i>	تَكْتُبَانِ <i>ta-ktub-aani</i>	تَكْتُبُونَ <i>ta-ktub-uuna</i>
f.	تَكْتُبِينَ <i>ta-ktub-iina</i>	تَكْتُبَانِ <i>ta-ktub-aani</i>	تَكْتُبْنَ <i>ta-ktub-na</i>
Third person m.	يَكْتُبُ <i>ya-ktub-u</i>	يَكْتُبَانِ <i>ya-ktub-aani</i>	يَكْتُبُونَ <i>ya-ktub-uuna</i>
f.	تَكْتُبُ <i>ta-ktub-u</i>	تَكْتُبَانِ <i>ta-ktub-aani</i>	يَكْتُبْنَ <i>ya-ktub-na</i>

The prefix and suffix together give the full meaning of the verb. They are sometimes referred to together as a “circumfix” because they surround the stem on both sides.⁸

⁷ The term *muDaari*^c literally means ‘resembling.’ This term was adopted because of the fact that the present tense mood markers on the verb (the suffixed *Damma* of the indicative and the *fatHa* of the subjunctive) resemble the case markers on nouns (especially the nominative and accusative). In other words, whereas the past tense verb has only one mood (the indicative) the present tense verb shifts its mood depending on the syntactic context, just as a noun shifts its case depending on its role in the sentence. The present tense therefore “resembles” a noun in this ability to shift its desinence.

⁸ The term “circumfix” refers to a combination of prefix and suffix used with a stem to create a lexical item, such as the English word “enlighten.” As Anderson states, they “involve simultaneous prefixation and suffixation that correspond to a single unit of morphological form” (1992, 53). The discontinuous inflectional affixes on Arabic present tense verbs may be considered circumfixes, but the concept of circumfix as a separate morphological category is disputed. See Golston 1996, 731, esp. note 8, as well as Anderson 1992, 53, 59, and 389.

1.2.3.2 MEANING: The present tense, or imperfect, refers in a general way to incomplete, ongoing actions or ongoing states. It corresponds to both the English present and present continuous tenses. There is no distinction between these in Arabic.

I write; I am writing	<i>ʿa-ktub-u</i>	أُكْتُبُ
we study; we are studying	<i>na-drus-u</i>	نُدْرُسُ
they (m.) translate, are translating	<i>yu-tarjim-uuna</i>	يُتَرْجِمُونَ
they (f.) meet; they are meeting	<i>ya-jtamiʿ-na</i>	يَجْتَمِعْنَ

Examples:

يلعبون مباراة.
ya-lʿab-uuna mubaaraat-an.
They are playing a match.

يجلس على المقعد.
ya-jlis-u ʿalaa l-maqʿad-i.
He is sitting on the seat.

يعمل في الإدارة.
ya-ʿmal-u fii l-ʿidaarat-i.
He works in the administration.

تختلف عن غيرها.
ta-xtalif-u ʿan ghayr-i-haa.
She differs from others.

1.2.4 Future tense: *al-mustaqbal* المستقبل

1.2.4.1 FORM: The future tense is formed by prefixing either the morpheme *sa-* or the particle *sawfa* to a present tense indicative verb. The verb may be active or passive. The particle *sa-* is identified by some grammarians as an abbreviation of *sawfa*.

1.2.4.2 MEANING: This procedure conveys an explicitly future action.

سيساعدُ إلى حدٍّ كبير.
sa-yu-saaʿid-u ʿilaa Hadd-in kabiir-in.
It will help to a great extent.

القرار سيتخذ.
al-qaraar-u sa-yu-ttaxadh-u.
The decision will be taken.

سأفكرُ في ذلك.
sa-ʿu-fakkir-u fii dhaalika.
I'll think about that.

سوف يمثلون بلادهم.
sawfa yu-maththil-uuna bilaad-a-hum.
They will represent their country.

1.2.5 Past tense: *al-maaDii* الماضي

1.2.5.1 FORM: The past tense in Arabic is formed by suffixing person-markers to the past tense verb stem. The person markers in the past tense also denote

number (singular, dual, plural) and gender. In MSA, thirteen person markers are used in the past tense paradigm:

Past tense stem <i>katab-</i> 'wrote'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	كَتَبْتُ <i>katab-tu</i>		كَتَبْنَا <i>katab-naa</i>
Second person m.	كَتَبْتَ <i>katab-ta</i>	كَتَبْتُمَا <i>katab-tumaa</i>	كَتَبْتُمْ <i>katab-tum</i>
f.	كَتَبْتِ <i>katab-ti</i>	كَتَبْتُمَا <i>katab-tumaa</i>	كَتَبْتُنَّ <i>katab-tunna</i>
Third person m.	كَتَبَ <i>katab-a</i>	كَتَبَا <i>katab-aa</i>	كَتَبُوا <i>katab-uu</i>
f.	كَتَبَتْ <i>katab-at</i>	كَتَبَتَا <i>katab-ataa</i>	كَتَبْنَ <i>katab-na</i>

1.2.5.2 SPELLING: The third person masculine plural suffix, *[-uu]* is spelled with a final *ʾalif*, which is not pronounced, sometimes called “otiose” *ʾalif*.⁹ It is simply a traditional spelling convention. It is deleted if the verb has a pronoun object suffix, e.g.,

كتبوا	كتبوها.	استخدموا	استخدموه.
<i>katab-uu</i>	<i>katab-uu-haa.</i>	<i>istaxdam-uu</i>	<i>istaxdam-uu-hu.</i>
they wrote	They wrote it.	they used	They used it.

وصفوه.
waSaf-uu-hu.
 They described it.

1.2.5.3 MEANING

(1) **Action in the past:** The Arabic past tense refers to a completed action and thus equates in most respects with English past tense and past perfect.¹⁰

⁹ See Chapter 2, section 4.2.1.3, subsection (3.3).

¹⁰ See Wright 1967, II:1–4 for further analysis of the past tense.

حاول انقاذ حياة رجل.

Haawal-a ʾinqaadh-a Hayaat-i rajul-in

He tried to save a man's life.

عادت من إجازة.

ʿaad-at min ʾijaazat-in.

She returned from a vacation.

سلموا بياناً.

sallam-uu bayaan-an.

They (m.) delivered a statement.

شكراً لكل ما فعلتموه.

*shukr-an li-kull-i maa faʿal-tum-uu-hu.*¹¹

Thank you for everything you (m.pl.) have done.

- (2) **Non-past action:** Depending on the context, the Arabic past tense may also be used to convey other meanings.¹² For example:

وصلنا تقريباً.

waSal-naa taqriib-an.

We are almost there (lit. 'we have almost arrived').

بارك الله فيك.

baarak-a llaah-u fii-ka.

God bless you (lit. 'God has blessed you').

1.3 Moods of the verb

Mood or "mode" refers to the Arabic verb properties **indicative, subjunctive, jussive, and imperative**. These categories, or morphosyntactic properties, reflect contextual modalities that condition the action of the verb. For example, the indicative mood is characteristic of straightforward, factual statements or questions, while the subjunctive mood reflects an attitude toward the action such as doubt, desire, intent, wishing, or necessity, and the jussive mood, when used for the imperative, indicates an attitude of command, request, or need-for-action on the part of the speaker.

In Arabic, mood marking is done only on the present tense or imperfective stem; there are no mood variants for the past tense. The Arabic moods are therefore non-finite; that is, they do not refer to specific points in time and are not differentiated by tense. Tense is inferred from context and other parts of the clause.¹³ For more extensive description of the moods and their uses, see Chapters 34 and 35.

¹¹ The second person plural masculine suffix *-tum* requires a long vowel *-uu* as a helping vowel before a suffixed personal pronoun.

¹² For example, the past tense is used in conditional sentences, as well as in optative (wishing) expressions. For more on this function of the past tense, see Chapter 39.

¹³ The question of mood marking (on verbs) is a central one in Arabic grammar, along with case marking (on nouns and adjectives). Moods fall under the topic of morphology because they are reflected in Arabic word structure, that is, they are usually indicated by suffixes or modifications of suffixes attached to the present tense verb stem, and the phonological nature of the verb stem determines what form the suffix will take. Moods also, however, fall under the topic of syntax because their use is determined either by particles which govern their occurrence, or by the narrative context in general, including attitude of the speaker and intended meaning. They are therefore referred to in some reference works and theoretical discussions as "morphosyntactic" categories.

1.3.1 Indicative mood

نرحّب بزبائننا.

nu-raHHib-u bi-zabaa'in-i-naa.

We welcome our customers.

يغادر القاهرة اليوم.

yu-ghaadir-u l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a.

He leaves Cairo today.

1.3.2 Subjunctive mood

يجب أن نقوم بزيارة.

ya-jib-u 'an na-quum-a bi-ziyaarat-in.

It is necessary that we undertake a visit.

1.3.3 Jussive mood

The jussive mood in MSA is used most often with the negative particle *lam* to negate the past tense, and as a basis for forming the imperative.

لم نأت.

lam na-'ti.

We did not come.

إصلاحات لم تكتمل منذ عامين

'iSlaaH-aat-un lam ta-ktamil mundh-u 'aam-ayni

renovations that haven't been completed for two years

1.3.4 Imperative

افتح يا سمسم!

iftaH yaa simsim-u!

Open, Sesame!

اسمح لي.

ismaH lii.

Permit me.

لا تنس!

laa ta-nsa!

Don't forget!

1.4 Voice: active or passive

Whereas the tense of a verb conveys temporal or time-related information, the "voice" of a verb conveys information on the topical focus of a sentence. The active voice is used when the doer of the action is the subject of the verb ("I ate the cake"), and the passive voice is used when the object of the verbal action is the subject ("The cake was eaten.").

Generally speaking, the passive voice is used in Arabic only if the agent or doer of the action is unknown or not to be mentioned for some reason. This contrasts with English where one may mention the agent in a passive construction through use of the preposition "by" ("The cake was eaten by me.") Rarely is the agent mentioned when the passive is used in Arabic.

The Arabic passive may be internal, through a change in the nature of the internal vowels (e.g., *'uqid-a* 'it was held') or derivational (e.g., *in'aqad-a* 'it was held').

For example, the following sentence is in the active voice:

عقد الملك الاجتماع.

'aqad-a l-malik-u l-ijitmaa'-a.

The king held the meeting.

where *al-malik-u* ‘the king’ is the subject of the verb as well as the agent or doer of the action, *‘aqad-a*, and the object of the verb is *al-ijtimaa^c-a* ‘the meeting.’

If the sentence were re-phrased as a passive construction, the object of the verb becomes the subject of the sentence, and the verb is marked for passive. The internal morphological change that signals the Arabic passive is a change in the vowel pattern of the verb:

عُقِدَ الاجتماعُ.

‘uqid-a l-ijtimaa^c-u.

The meeting was held.

where *al-ijtimaa^c-u* is now the subject, and the verb is inflected for passive voice through the vowel sequence /-u-i-/ instead of /-a-a-/.

Another way of expressing the passive is to use another form of the verb which is passive or reflexive in meaning, usually the Form VII verb, if it exists, or Form V:

انْعَقَدَ الاجتماعُ.

in‘aqad-a l-ijtimaa^c-u.

The meeting was held.

where the Form VII verb is active in form, but passive in meaning, and the subject of the Form VII verb is *al-ijtimaa^c-u*. Passive and passive-like structures are described at greater length in Chapter 38.

2 Complex predicates: compound verbs, *qad*, and verb strings

Arabic verbal expressions may consist of more than the main verb. Auxiliary verbs may be used in conjunction with a main verb to express variations of tense and aspect, and the verbal particle *qad* is also used to convey information about aspect.

2.1 Compound verbs

Compound verbs are tenses that consist of the verb *kaan-a* plus a main verb. They are as follows:

2.1.1 The past progressive

To convey the idea of continued or habitual action in the past, the verb *kaan-a* is used in the past tense in conjunction with the present tense of the main verb. Both parts of this compound verb are inflected for person, gender, and number. The main verb always comes after *kaan-a*; if there is a specific subject mentioned, it comes between the two parts of the verb.

This tense of the verb is used for expressing what in English would be “used to,” or “was _____ ing.” Sometimes, with certain verbs in certain contexts it is used to

express a concept of an action that took place in the past, but extended or endured over a period of time, rather than taking place at a discrete moment in time. This is especially true of experiential verbs that denote states of mind, such as knowing, feeling, liking. In those cases, the English equivalent is often just a simple past tense.

كانت ترتدي قميصاً أزرق.
kaan-at ta-rtadii qamiiS-an ʔazraq-a.
 She was wearing a blue shirt.

كان يعمل في المطبخ.
kaan-a ya-ʿmal-u fii l-maTbax-i.
 He used to work in the kitchen.

كانوا يستيقظون يومياً في الساعة السادسة.
kaan-uu ya-stayqiZ-uuna yawmiyy-an fii
al-saaʿat-i al-saadisat-i.
 They used to wake up daily at 6:00.

كنا نأمل
kun-naa na-ʔmal-u
 we were hoping

2.1.1.1 PAST PROGRESSIVE WITH EXPERIENTIAL VERBS: A state of knowing, feeling, or understanding is one that is considered to extend over a period of time in the past, and therefore such verbs are often expressed with the past continuous tense rather than the simple past in Arabic. English does not usually express these concepts with the past progressive tense, but with the simple past.

كانوا يعرفون الشعوب الإيبيرية.
kaan-uu ya-ʿrif-uuna l-shuʿuub-a l-ʔiibiiriyyat-a.
 They knew [over a period of time] the Iberian peoples.

كانا يعلمان بالغارة.
kaan-aa ya-ʿlam-aani bi-l-ghaarat-i
 They (two) knew about / had knowledge about the raid.

2.1.1.2 PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE MEANING WITH PRESENT TENSE AND *mundhu*: When a state or action begins in the past and continues into the present, with specific reference to the length of time that the state or action continued, the present tense is used in Arabic although the past perfect progressive is used in English. In equational sentences the present tense is expressed without a verb. This meaning occurs most frequently with the particle *mundh-u* ‘since; for; ago.’ (See also Chapter 16, section 2.3.4.)

(1) Verbal sentences:

أعيش هنا منذ خمس سنوات.
ʔa-ʿiish-u hunaa mundhu xams-i sanawaat-in
 I have been living here for five years.

يعمل في دائرة البلدية منذ شهرين.

ya-ʿmal-u fii daaʿirat-i l-baladiyyat-i mundhu shahr-ayni.

He has been working in the county administration for two months.

- (2) **Equational sentences:** In these two sentences, an active participle is used instead of a verb with past perfect progressive meaning.

تجارتها قائمة على التصدير والاستيراد منذ زمن طويل.

tijaarat-u-haa qaaʿimat-un ʿalaa l-taṣdiir-i wa-l-istiiraad-i mundh-u zaman-in

Tawiil-in.

Its trade has been based on export and import for a long time.

هذا الزحف مستمر منذ ملايين السنين.

haadhaa l-zaḥf-u mustamirr-un mundh-u malaayin-i l-saniina.

This reptile has been [in] continuous [existence] for millions of years.

2.2 Pluperfect or past perfect: anteriority

To express an anterior action, i.e., an action in the past that is over with and which serves as a background action for the present, the past tense of *kaan-a* is used with a past tense of the main verb¹⁴. The particle *qad* may be optionally inserted just before the main verb. Note that the subject of the verb, if mentioned as a separate noun, goes between the auxiliary verb and the main verb. If the subject noun is human and plural, the main verb inflects for plural, although the auxiliary verb remains singular because it precedes the subject.

2.2.1 With subject noun

كان السفير قد وصل مساء الجمعة.

kaan-a l-safiir-u (qad) waṣal-a masaaʿ-a l-jumʿat-i.

The ambassador had arrived Friday evening.

وكان العلماء توافدوا إلى مدينة بغداد.

wa-kaan-a l-ʿulamaaʿ-u tawaafad-uu ʿilaa madiinat-i baghdaad-a.

The scholars had flocked to the city of Baghdad.

كان محامون أمريكيون شاركوا.

kaan-a muḥaam-uuna ʿamriikiyy-uuna shaarak-uu.

American lawyers had participated.

¹⁴ An alternative but less frequently used way of expressing the pluperfect in MSA is to use the expression *sabaq-a ʿan* 'it preceded that' before the main verb:

سبق أن التقى مراراً قادة الأكراد.

sabaq-a ʿan-i ltaqaa maraar-an qaadat-a l-ʾakraad-i.

He had [already] met with the leaders of the Kurds many times.

وكان المسجد قد بُني قبل ثلاثة عشر قرناً.

wa-kaan-a l-masjid-u qad buniy-a qabl-a thalaathat-a 'ashar-a qarn-an.

The mosque **had been built** thirteen centuries ago.

2.2.2 Without subject noun

كانوا يعملوا مع عمان.

kaan-uu 'amil-uu ma'a 'ammaan-a.

They had been working with Amman.

كان اتهمهم بالتحرش به.

kaan-a ttaham-a-hum bi-l-taHarrush-i bi-hi.

He had accused them of provoking him.

لم تكن طلبت حماية.

lam ta-kun Talab-at Himaayat-an.

She had not requested protection.

2.3 Future perfect

To indicate a state or action expected to be completed in the future, the **present or future tense of *kaan-a* is used with a past tense main verb:**

وإلا، فستكون فشلت في دورها...

wa-'illaa, fa-sa-ta-kuun-u fashil-at fii dawr-i-haa...

and if not, it will have failed in its role...

2.4 Unreal condition

To describe an action that would or could have taken place, but actually did not, the **past tense of *kaan-a* is used with the future tense of the main verb.** This is called an unreal condition or a contrary-to-fact condition.

ما كانت ستعرف القراءة والكتابة.

maa kaan-at sa-ta-'rif-u l-qiraa'at-a wa-l-kitaabat-a.

She **would not have known** [how] to read and write ('reading and writing').

كنت سأستخدم شيئاً آخر.

kun-tu sa-'a-staxdim-u shay'an 'aaxar-a.

I **was going to use** something else.

كان الفريق سيفوز بالمسابقات إذا كانت اللجنة قد سمحت لهم بالتسابق.

kaan-a l-fariiq-u sa-ya-fuuz-u bi-l-musaabaqaat-i 'idhaa kaan-at-i l-lajnat-u qad

samaH-at la-hum bi-l-tasaabuq-i.

The team **would have won** in the competitions if the committee had permitted them to participate.

2.5 The particle *qad*

The particle *qad* is used with verbs. It has no exact lexical equivalent in English and various theories have been put forth as to its function.¹⁵ One theory is that it is used to emphasize or confirm aspect; that is, whether or not an action has been completed, and to what degree. Used with the past (or “perfect”) tense, *qad* emphasizes and asserts that the action has indeed happened. In this context it may be translated as ‘indeed,’ ‘already,’ or ‘really’ but sometimes it is not translatable.¹⁶

With the imperfect or present tense, it emphasizes the possibility of the action or its potentiality rather than its actual achievement. In this case it is usually translated as ‘may,’ ‘might,’ or ‘perhaps.’

Used in conjunction with the compound pluperfect tense verb (*kaana qad* كان قد), it is part of the compound verb structure, coming after the auxiliary verb *kaan-a* and before the past tense main verb.¹⁷ Rarely is *qad* used when the verb is negative.

As with other words that end in *sukuun*, *qad* needs a helping vowel *kasra* if it occurs before a consonant cluster.

2.5.1 *qad* with past (perfect) tense

Used with the past tense, *qad* may occur on its own, but it may also be prefixed with the particles *wa-* و-, *fa-* ف- or *la-* ل-. These particles do not change the meaning of *qad* although they may imply a temporal sequence such as “and then.” Depending on context, the past tense verb with *qad* may be equivalent either to the simple past or to the past perfect. The use of *qad* here serves to confirm the meaning of the past tense by emphasizing that the action did indeed happen. Sometimes the insertion of the word “indeed” in English is appropriate.

قد تحققت أخيراً.	ولقد وجدته في الصندوق.
<i>qad taHaqqaq-at ʾaxiir-an.</i>	<i>wa-la-qad wajaḍ-tu-hu fii l-Sanduuq-i.</i>
It was finally / has finally been realized.	And (then) I found it in the box.

قد ارتكب هذه الجريمة منفرداً.
<i>qad-i rtakab-a haadhihi l-jariimat-a munfarid-an.</i>
(Indeed) He committed / has committed this crime on his own.

ولذلك فقد حافظوا على المخطوطات.

wa-li-dhaalika fa-qad HaafaZ-uu ʿalaa l-maxTuutaa-t-i.

And therefore they (indeed) kept the manuscripts.

¹⁵ See Bahloul 1996 for an in-depth analysis of the nature and uses of *qad*.

¹⁶ ‘Abd al-Latif et al. (1997, 233) state that *qad* “is a particle of affirmation if it comes before a past tense verb, and a particle of diminution if it comes before a present tense verb.” *qad Harfu taHqiq-in ʾidhaa daxal-at ʿalaa l-maaDii, wa-Harf-u taqliil-in ʾidhaa daxal-at ʿalaa l-muDaariʿ.*

¹⁷ “The modal particle *qad* tends quite often to occur inside the verbal complex, that is, between the auxiliary verb and the thematic verb” (Bahloul 1996, 37).

قال «لقد اتفقنا مع الإسرائيليين.»

qaal-a "la-qad-i ttafaq-naa ma^a-a l-'israa'iiliyy-iina."

He said "(Indeed) we have agreed with the Israelis."

لقد أردنا أن نثبت للجميع أننا فريق جيد.

la-qad 'arad-naa 'an nu-thbit-a li-l-jamii-i 'anna-naa fariiq-un jayyid-un.

We (indeed) wanted to prove to everyone that we are a good team.

2.5.1.1 *fa-qad* + PAST TENSE: This conjunction introduces a clause in the past tense that acts as circumstance or background to the previous clause, stating an action or state that precedes the action in the previous clause chronologically or logically.¹⁸ As Abboud and McCarus state (1983, part 1:537), "this construction indicates a completed action whose results are still in effect" with regard to the previous clause. This is considered a type of *Haal* or circumstantial structure.

لم يجب شيئاً. فقد غرق في نوم عميق.

lam ya-jib shay^a-an. fa-qad ghariq-a fii nawm-in 'amiiq-in.

He did not answer anything, **having fallen** into a deep sleep.

(Kouloughli 1994, 274)

2.5.2 *qad* with present (imperfect) tense = possibility

Used with the indicative present tense, *qad* implies possibility.

بل قد يكون هناك ثلج.

bal qad ya-kuun-u hunaka thalj-un.

There **might even be** snow.

قد يتبادر إلى ذهنك.

qad ya-tabaadar-u 'ilaa dhihn-i-ka.

It **might cross** your mind.

قد تتخذ أشكالاً مختلفة.

qad ta-ttaxidh-u 'ashkaal-an muxtalifat-an.

They **may adopt** different shapes.

قد تكون أكثر أهمية.

qad ta-kuun-u 'akthar-a 'ahamiyyat-an.

It **might be** of greater importance.

2.6 Verb strings or serial verb constructions

Certain verbs can directly precede others, thereby modifying the meaning of the main verb and acting as auxiliary verbs. Whenever the verb phrase consists of two or more verbs, the subject, if mentioned, is usually put between them. These verbs fall into several classes.

¹⁸Haywood and Nahmad state: "The particle *qad* is sometimes used before the Perfect verb. It is a confirmatory particle, which may make the verb definitely Past perfect . . . However, this particle may also make the verb Pluperfect . . . according to context" (1962, 100).

2.6.1 Verbs of appropinquation

These verbs indicate proximity or nearness to an action, but not quite the achievement of it, referred to by Wright as verbs of “appropinquation” (1967, II:106).¹⁹ These include verbs such as *kaad-a/ya-kaad-u* ‘to almost [do something]; be on the point of [doing something]’ and *’awshak-a yuushik-u* ‘to be on the verge’ of doing something.

وكاد الموضوع يمحى من الذاكرة العربية.

wa-kaad-a l-mawDuu‘-u yu-mHaa min-a l-dhaakirat-i l-‘arabiyyat-i.

The subject was almost erased from Arab memory.

كادت الشمس تشرق.

kaad-at-i l-shams-u tu-shriq-u.

The sun had almost risen.

نكاد لا نجد نظيراً له.

na-kaad-u laa na-jid-u naZiir-an la-hu.

We can almost not find a counterpart to it.

كادت تتحول إلى اشتباك بالأيدي.

kaad-at ta-taHawwal-u ‘ilaa shtibaak-in bi-l-‘aydii.

It almost changed into hand-to-hand combat.

Sometimes, *kaad-a* or *’awshak-a* are followed by the subjunctivizing particle *’an*, in which case the following verb is in the subjunctive:

كادت الملاحة الجوية أن تتوقف تماماً.

kaad-at-i l-milaaHat-u l-jawwiyyat-u ‘an ta-tawaqqaf-a tamaam-an.

Air traffic almost stopped totally.

أوشكنا أن نسقط.

’awshak-naa ‘an na-squt-a.

We almost fell (were on the verge of falling).

أوشك أن يسأل عن اسمها.

’awshak-a ‘an ya-s’al-a ‘an-i sm-i-haa.

He almost asked about her name.

Sometimes, with *’awshak-a*, a verbal noun may be used instead of a following verb:

أوشك الاعتقاد بوجود مؤامرة.

’awshak-a l-i‘tiqaad-u bi-wujuud-i mu’aamarat-in.

They almost believed in the existence of a conspiracy (‘belief verged’).

Used in the negative, the implication of *kaad-a* is that an action has just barely taken place, usually translatable as ‘hardly,’ or ‘scarcely.’

لم يكد يسدل الستار.

lam ya-kad yu-sdal-u l-sitaar-u.

The curtain had hardly been dropped.

¹⁹ Blachère and Goudefroy Demombynes refer to them as “verbes d’imminence” (1975, 268).

2.6.2 Inceptive verbs

Another set of helping verbs is inceptive or inchoative. They convey the idea of starting or setting about an action and are usually used in the past with a present tense main verb. In MSA these verbs include:

to set about	<i>jaʿal-a</i> (literally ‘to make’)	جعل
to start	<i>ʾaxadh-a</i> (literally, ‘to take’)	أخذ
to start	<i>badaʾ-a</i> (literally, ‘to begin’)	بدأ
to set about	<i>Saar-a</i> (literally, ‘to become’)	صار
	<i>ʾaSbaH-a</i>	أصبح

بدأ يلفت النظر.	منذ الستينات صارت تأخذ دوراً أكبر.
<i>badaʾ-a yu-lfit-u l-naZar-a.</i>	<i>mundhu l-sittiinaat-i Saar-at ta-ʾxudh-u</i>
It started to attract attention.	<i>dawr-an ʾakbar-a.</i>
	Since the sixties it has started to
	assume a larger role.

2.6.3 Verbs of continuation

These verbs, when used as auxiliaries, convey the concept of continuing an action or a state:

baat-a بات

باتت البلاد تُعرف به اليوم.
baat-at-i l-bilaad-u tu-ʿraf-u bi-hi l-yawm-a.
 The country is still known by it today.

Zall-a ظل

ظلّ يردّد العبارة.	ظلّ يسعى وراء هدفه.
<i>Zall-a yu-raddid-u l-ʿibaarat-a.</i>	<i>Zall-a ya-sʿaa waraaʾ-a hadaf-i-hi</i>
He kept repeating the expression.	He continued to pursue (‘after’) his goal.

maa zaal-a ما زال

الأمر لا تزال تحتاج إلى كثير من الجهد.
al-ʾumuur-u laa ta-zaal-u ta-Htaaj-u ʾilaa kathiir-in min-a l-jahd-i.
 Matters still require much effort.

maDaa مضى

ومضى يشتري الخضار.
wa-maDaa ya-shtirii l-xuDaar-a.
 He went on to buy vegetables.

baqiya بقي

بقيت القضية تتفاقم وتهدأ.

baqiy-at-i l-qaDiyyat-u ta-tafaaqam-u wa-ta-hda'-u.

The problem kept getting dangerous and [then] subsiding.

2.6.4 Simultaneous verbal action (*al-Haal* الحال)

Certain concepts are conveyed by verbs describing simultaneous states or actions. The subject may remain the same for both verbs, or it may be different. This structure is a form of *Haal*, or adverbial expression that describes what someone was doing at the time of the action of the main verb.²⁰

With same subject:

ومضى يقول . . .

wa-maDaa ya-quul-u . . .

He continued, saying . . .

With different subject:

شاهدها ترش طلاء.

shaahad-a-haa ta-rushsh-u Tilaa'-an.

He saw her spattering paint.

لا تتركك تنتظر.

laa ta-truk-u-ka ta-ntaZir-u.

It doesn't leave you waiting.

²⁰ On the *Haal* حال construction, see Chapter 11, section 2.3.1, and also Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.3.

Form I: The base form triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern

Form I is considered the base form because of its fundamental structure. In Arabic, this form is termed *mujarrad* مُجَرَّد: ‘bare; stripped’ because it is the simplest stem of all. The base pattern for Form I past tense is **CaCVC**, that is, consonant-*fatHa*-consonant-short vowel-consonant. Although the first short vowel is consistently *fatHa*, the second, or **stem vowel**, may be *fatHa*, *kasra* or *Damma*: *fa‘al-a* فَعَلَ, *fa‘il-a* فَعِلَ, *fa‘ul-a* فَعُلَ.

The present tense stem vowel (the vowel that follows the second root consonant) is also variable in Form I. It may be /a/, /u/, or /i/.

1.2 Meaning

Form I is the closest indicator of the meaning of the lexical root. There are shades of meaning associated with the **stem vowel** differences in the past tense citation forms, but these semantic differences are very subtle. Note that every verb and verbal noun has a range of meanings, sometimes extensive. Glosses or English equivalents provided here are not exclusive or exact meanings but represent common standard usage.

1.3 Transitivity

Form I covers a wide semantic range and may be either intransitive or transitive. Occasionally it is doubly transitive.

1.4 Inflection

A particular inflectional characteristic of Form I verbs is that the present tense subject-marker vowel is *fatHa* (e.g., *ya-drus-u*, *ya-wadd-u*, *ya-‘nii*).

1.5 Root types

The nature of the three root consonants determines the root type. Phonological and morphophonemic rules apply to various kinds of sound and irregular roots,

as follows.¹ Paradigm charts for all Form I root types are located at the end of this chapter.

2 Regular (sound) trilateral root (*al-fiʿl al-SaHiiH al-saalim* الفعل الصحيح السالم)

Sound or regular verbal roots consist of three consonants, all of which are different and none of which are *waaw*, *yaaʾ*, or *hamza*. The Form I verbs are presented here by their stem types, which fall into three groups.²

2.1 Past tense stem vowel is *fatHa*

When the past tense stem vowel is *fatHa*, the present tense stem vowel may be */a/*, */u/*, or */i/*, so there are three subgroups within this class. Occasionally, the present tense may show two different stem vowels.

2.1.1 *faʿal-a/ ya-fʿal-u*

Here *fatHa* is the stem vowel in both the past and present tenses. There is some indication that the present tense medial vowel in this verb form is conditioned by the nature of its contiguous consonants, which would be the second and third root consonants. The general theory is that a *fatHa* in the present tense is associated with a back (pharyngeal or glottal) consonant.³

to gather, to collect	<i>jamaʿ-a/ya-jmaʿ-u</i>	جمع / يجمع
to open; to conquer	<i>fataH-a/ya-ftaH-u</i>	فتح / يفتح
to go	<i>dhahab-a/ya-dhhab-u</i>	ذهب / يذهب
to grant	<i>manaH-a/ya-mnaH-u</i>	منع / يمنع
to remove, take off	<i>xalaʿ-a/ya-xlaʿ-u</i>	خلع / يخلع

2.1.2 *faʿal-a / ya-fʿil-u*

This type of Form I verb has *fatHa* in the past tense stem and *kasra* as the medial vowel in the present tense.

to return, to go back	<i>rajaʿ-a/ya-rjiʿ-u</i>	رجع / يرجع
to dig	<i>Hafar-a/ya-Hfir-u</i>	حفر / يحفر

¹ Traditional Arabic grammar divides verb roots into two major classes: (1) *SaHiiH* صحيح 'sound' and (2) *muʿtall* معتل 'weak.' Sound roots are ones that do not contain either *waaw* or *yaaʾ*; weak roots contain *waaw* or *yaaʾ* as one or more of the root phonemes. In this text, I have allotted separate categories for doubled and hamzated verbs because they sometimes involve stem changes when inflected, even though they are considered *SaHiiH*, or 'sound,' in Arabic grammatical terms.

² Certain roots may have more than one stem in the past. Sometimes this indicates a meaning difference, sometimes not. For example, *shamal-a/ya-shmal-u* 'to contain, include' and also *shamil-a/ya-shmal-u* with the same meaning.

³ For more analysis of the Form I stem-vowel alternation see McCarthy 1991, esp. pp. 69–70, and see also McOmber 1995, 178–85.

to carry	Hamal-a/ya-Hmil-u	حَمَلَ / يَحْمِلُ
to know	‘araf-a/ya-‘rif-u	عَرَفَ / يَعْرِفُ
to acquire, possess	malak-a/ya-mlik-u	مَلَكَ / يَمْلِكُ

2.1.3 *fa‘al-a/ ya-f‘ul-u*

The past tense stem vowel is *fatHa*, the present tense stem vowel is *Damma*.

to rub	farak-a/ya-fruk-u	فَرَكَ / يَفْرِكُ
to leave	tarak-a/ya-truk-u	تَرَكَ / يَتْرِكُ
to request, ask for	Talab-a/ya-Tlub-u	طَلَبَ / يَطْلُبُ
to study	daras-a/ya-drus-u	دَرَسَ / يَدْرُسُ
to transfer	naqal-a/ya-nqul-u	نَقَلَ / يَنْقُلُ

2.2 Past tense stem vowel is *kasra*: *fa‘il-a/ ya-f‘al-u*

When the past tense stem vowel is *kasra*, the present tense stem vowel is normally *fatHa*.

to drink	sharib-a/ya-shrab-u	شَرِبَ / يَشْرَبُ
to do, make; to work	‘amil-a/ya-‘mal-u	عَمِلَ / يَعْمَلُ
to know	‘alim-a/ya-‘lam-u	عَلِمَ / يَعْلَمُ
to hear	sami‘-a/ya-sma‘-u	سَمِعَ / يَسْمَعُ

2.3 Past tense stem vowel is *Damma*: *fa‘ul-a/ ya-f‘ul-u*

This Form I stem has *Dammās* as both stem vowels. This stem class generally denotes states of being, or the acquisition or increase of a certain quality. These roots therefore also are the roots of many adjectives. This type of Form I verb is usually intransitive.

to be heavy (adjective: ‘heavy’ <i>thaqīl</i> ثقيل)	thaqul-a/ya-thqul-u	ثَقُلَ / يَتَقَلُّ
to grow or be big; grow older (adjective: ‘big, great’ <i>kabīr</i> كبير)	kabur-a/ya-kbur-u	كَبُرَ / يَكْبُرُ
to be good (adjective: ‘good’ <i>Hasan</i> حسن)	Hasun-a/ya-Hsun-u	حَسُنَ / يَحْسُنُ

2.4 Examples of Form I sound verbs in context

يَهْطُلُ الثَّلَجُ عَلَى الْجِبَالِ. <i>ya-hTil-u l-thalj-u ‘alaa l-jibaa-l-i.</i> Snow falls on the mountains.	يُدْفَعُونَ الثَّمَنَ. <i>ya-dfa‘-uuna l-thaman-a.</i> They are paying the price.
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حضر اللقاء عدد من الممثلين.

HaDar-a l-liqa²-a ʿadad-un min-a l-mumaththil-iina.

A number of representatives **attended** the meeting.

فتح الباب.

fataH-a l-baab-a.

It **opened** the door.

3 Geminate verb root (*al-fiʿl al-muDaʿaf* المفعف⁴)

Geminate or **doubled** verbal roots are ones where the second and third consonant of the root are the same. In the citation form of Form I, the doubled or geminate consonant is written only once, with a *shadda* above it to show that it is double.

3.1 Stem shifts

Geminate verbs have two stems in the past and also two in the present. This is because of a phonological rule that prevents two identical consonants from being in sequence with a short vowel between them when they are directly followed by a vowel, e.g., instead of **radad-a* it is *radd-a* ('he replied'), instead of **ya-HTuT-uuna*, it is *ya-HuTT-uuna* ('they put').

However, if the second identical stem consonant is followed by another consonant, the identical consonants remain separated, e.g., *radad-tu* ('I replied'), *ya-HTuT-na* ('they (f.) put').⁵ This second type of stem, where the identical consonants are split, is referred to here as the "split stem."

In the past tense conjugation, many of the inflectional suffixes start with consonants (*-tu, -ta, -ti, -tumaa, -naa, -tunna, -tum, -na*), so the split stem in the past tense is fairly common; in the present tense, however, the only suffix that starts with a consonant is the *-na* of the second and third persons feminine plural (e.g., *ya-rdud-na* 'they (f.) reply').

3.2 Stem types

Doubled Form I verbs fall into three stem types, according to their stem vowels. The citation forms of the past tense third person singular all look alike, so in order to know the stem type, it is necessary to know the stem vowel in the present tense. The first person singular past tense and the third person feminine plural present tense are given as examples for these verbs to illustrate the stem vowels.

3.2.1 *faʿal-a / ya-fʿul-u* (a/u) → *faʿl-a / ya-fuʿl-u*

to show, indicate	<i>dall-a/ya-dull-u</i>	دَلَّ / يَدُلُّ
past tense split stem:	<i>dalal-tu</i>	دَلَّلْتُ
present tense split stem:	<i>ya-dlul-na</i>	يَدُلُّنَّ

⁴ The technical Arabic term for "doubled" is given as *muDaʿaf* مضعف in ʿAbd al-Latif et al. (1997, 140) and as *muDaaʿaf* مضاعف by Wright 1967 (I:69).

⁵ Abboud and McCarus 1983 (Part 2:81–88) have a detailed description of the phonological rules and the forms of the doubled Form I verb.

to put, place	HaTT-a/ya-HuTT-u	حَطَّ / يَحْطُّ
past tense split stem:	HaTaT-tu	حَطَّطْتُ
present tense split stem:	ya-HTuT-na	يَحْطِطُنَ

3.2.2 *fa^cal-a/ya-f^cil-u (a/i) → fa^cl-a/ya-fi^cl-u*

be small, few; diminish	qall-a/ya-qill-u	قَلَّ / يَقِلُّ
past tense split stem:	qalal-tu	قَلَّلْتُ
present tense split stem:	ya-qlil-na	يَقْلِلُنَ
to be complete	tamm-a/ya-timm-u	تَمَّ / يَتِمُّ
past tense split stem:	tamam-tu	تَمَمْتُ
present tense split stem:	ya-tmim-na	يَتَمِمُنَ

3.2.3 *fa^cil-a/ya-f^ca-lu (i/a) → fa^cl-a/ya-fa^cl-u*

In this stem type, the past tense stem vowel *kasra* shows up only in the split stem, when the verb has a suffix that starts with a consonant. In the citation form, it has been deleted because of phonological restrictions.⁶

to want; to like	wadd-a/ya-wadd-u	وَدَّ / يُوَدُّ
past tense split stem:	wadid-tu	وَدَدْتُ
present tense split stem:	ya-wdad-na	يُوَدِّدُنَ
to continue, keep doing (s.th.)	Zall-a/ya-Zall-u	ظَلَّ / يَظَلُّ
past tense split stem:	Zalil-tu	ظَلَّلْتُ
present tense split stem:	ya-Zlal-na	يَظْلَلُنَ

3.1 Examples of Form I geminate verbs in context

تَمَّ الاتِّفَاقُ. <i>tamm-a l-ittifaaq-u.</i> The agreement was completed.	سيارة تمر في الشارع <i>sayyaarat-un ta-murr-u fii l-shaari^c-i</i> a car passing by in the street
رَدَّتْ على سؤال. <i>radd-at^c alaa su³aal-in.</i> She responded to a question.	كيف تتم عمليات الإخلاء؟ <i>kayfa ta-timm-u^c amaliyyaat-u l-³ixlaa³-i?</i> How are the evacuation operations accomplished?

⁶ Wehr (1979) gives both the citation form and the split-stem form for this stem type of doubled verb.

4 Hamzated verb root (*al-fiʿl al-mahmuuz* الفعل المهموز)

A hamzated verb is one where any one of the root consonants is *hamza*. It may occur as the first, second, or third consonant. These verbs are considered a separate category because of rules that govern the occurrence and distribution of *hamza*, and also because of *hamza* spelling rules. As the verbal roots inflect within conjugations or as they shift into derived forms, the seat of *hamza* may change.

4.1 *Hamza*-initial Form I verbs

to eat ^ʔakal-a/ya-^ʔkul-u أَكَلَ / يَأْكُل to take ^ʔaxadh-a/ya-^ʔxudh-u أَخَذَ / يَأْخُذْ

4.2 Hamza-medial Form I verbs

to ask (s.o. s.th.)	<i>sa'al-a/ya-s'al-u</i>	سَأَلَ / يَسْأَلُ
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to repair, to bandage	<i>la'am-a/ya-l'am-u</i>	لَامَ / يَلَامُ
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4.3 *Hamza*-final Form I verbs

to begin *bada²-a/ya-bda²-u* بَدَأَ / يَبْدَأُ to read *qara²-a/ya-qra²-u* قَرَأَ / يَقْرَأُ

Examples of Form I hamzated verbs in context:

علينا أن نبدأ من الصفر. *ʿalay-naa ʾan na-bdaʾ-a min-a l-Sifr-i.*

في بيروت يبدأ سحر الشرق. *fii bayruut-a ya-bdaʾ-u siHru l-sharq-i.*

We have to **begin** from zero.

In Beirut **starts** the magic of the East.

5 Assimilated verb root (*al-fiʿl al-mithaal* الفعل المثل)

Assimilated verb roots begin with a semi-consonant (*waaw* or *yaa'*), most often *waaw*. They are called **assimilated** in English because the initial *waaw*, even though it is part of the root, often disappears in the present tense, deleted or assimilated to the subject-marker prefix. The *yaa'* does not normally get assimilated.⁷

5.1 First root consonant deleted in present tense

This group consists of a number of frequently occurring verbs in MSA. They fall into two groups: those with *fatHa* in the past tense stem and *kasra* in the present tense, and those with *fatHa* as the stem vowel in both tenses.

5.1.1 *fatHa/kasra*

to arrive waSal-a/ya-Sil-u وَصَلَ / يَصِلُ to be wajaB-a/ya-jib-u وَجَبَ / يَجِبُ
necessary

to find *wajad-a/ya-jid-u* وجد / يجد to weigh *wazan-a/ya-zin-u* وزن / يزن

⁷ Wright 1967 (I:78-81) provides an extensive analysis of this verb type in Classical Arabic.

5.1.2 *fatHa/fatHa*

to fall *waqa^c-a/ya-qa^c-u* وَقَعَ / يَقَعُ to put *waDa^c-a/ya-Da^c-u* وَضَعَ / يَضَعُ

5.2 First root consonant not deleted in present tense

This group consists of *waaw*-initial verbs whose stem vowel in the past is *kasra* or *Damma*, and of verbs whose initial root consonant is *yaa^ʔ*. They behave as regular or sound verbs.

5.2.1 *kasra/fatHa*

to ache, hurt *waji^c-a/ya-wja^c-u* وَجَعَ / يَوْجَعُ
to like, love *wadd-a/ya-wadd-u*⁸ وَدَّ / يُوَدُّ

5.2.2 *Damma/Damma*

to be wide *wasu^c-a/ya-wsu^c-u* وَسَّعَ / يَوْسَعُ

5.2.3 *yaa^ʔ*-initial

to be easy *yasir-a/ya-ysir-u*⁹ يَسَّرَ / يَيْسِرُ
to wake up *yaqiZ-a/ya-yqaZ-u*¹⁰ يَقَظَ / يَيْقِظُ

Examples of Form I assimilated verbs in context:

يجب أن تتوقف.

ya-jib-u ʔan ta-tawaqqaf-a.

They must stop ('it is necessary that they stop').

وصفوها.

waSaf-uu-haa.

They described her.

وصل الرئيس إلى تونس أمس.

waSal-a l-raʔiis-u ʔilaa tuunis-a ʔams-i.

The president arrived in Tunis yesterday.

6 Hollow root (*al-fi^cl al-ʔajwaf* الفعل الأجوف)

Hollow verbs are ones in which the second root consonant is actually a semi-consonant: either *waaw* or *yaa^ʔ*. These two semi-consonants undergo various mutations, turning into *ʔalif*, a short vowel, or a long vowel depending on the word structure and derivation. In the past tense citation form, for example, the *waaw* or *yaa^ʔ* is not present and is replaced by *ʔalif*. However, to look up one of these words

⁸ This verb is geminate as well as assimilated. Phonotactic rules prevent the initial *waaw* from becoming assimilated in this case.

⁹ Also *ya-sur-a/ya-ysur-u* 'to be small; to be easy.' ¹⁰ Also *ya-quZ-a/ya-yquZ-u*.

in a dictionary, one must know what the medial root consonant is, either *waaw* or *yaa'*. The medial root consonant often shows itself in the present tense verb stem (as a long or short vowel) and elsewhere, as in the verbal nouns or participles.

There are essentially three variations on the hollow verb root, determined by which long vowel is in the present tense or imperfective stem: *waaw*, *yaa'*, or *'alif*.

6.1 Hollow-*waaw*

These verbs have *waaw* as their medial radical. The stem vowel in the past tense is *'alif* when it is long and *Damma* when it is short. Examples of both stems are given. The first person singular is used to exemplify the short stem. The stem vowel in the present tense is *waaw* when long and *Damma* when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

to say	<i>qaal-a (qul-tu)/ya-quul-u (ya-qul-na)</i>	قَالَ (قُلْتُ) / يَقُولُ (يَقُلْنَ)
to visit	<i>zaar-a (zur-tu)/ya-zuur-u (ya-zur-na)</i>	زَارَ (زُرْتُ) / يَزُورُ (يَزُرْنَ)

6.2 Hollow *yaa'*

These verbs have *yaa'* as the medial radical. The stem vowel in the past tense is *'alif* when it is long and *kasra* when it is short. Examples of both stems are given. The first person singular is used to exemplify the short stem. The stem vowel in the present tense is *yaa'* when long and *kasra* when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

to live	<i>'aash-a ('ish-tu)/ya-'iish-u (ya-'ish-na)</i>	عَاشَ (عِشْتُ) / يَعِيشُ (يَعِشْنَ)
to sell	<i>baa'-a (bi'-tu)/ya-bii'-u (ya-bi'-na)</i>	بَاعَ (بِعْتُ) / يَبِيعُ (يَبِيعْنَ)

6.3 Hollow *'alif*

These verb roots have either medial *waaw* or *yaa'* but do not show it in the present tense, using *'alif* instead. The stem vowel in the past tense is *'alif* when it is long and *kasra* when it is short. Examples of both stems are given. The first person singular is used to exemplify the short stem. The stem vowel in the present tense is *'alif* when long and *fatHa* when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

to sleep	<i>naam-a (nim-tu)/ya-naam-u (ya-nam-na)</i> (root: n-w-m)	نَامَ (نِمْتُ) / يَنَامُ (يَنَمْنَ)
to fear	<i>xaaf-a (xif-tu)/ya-xaaf-u (ya-xaf-na)</i> (root: x-w-f)	خَافَ (خِفْتُ) / يَخَافُ (يَخَفْنَ)
to obtain	<i>naal-a (nil-tu)/ya-naal-u (ya-nal-na)</i> (root: n-y-l)	نَالَ (نِلْتُ) / يَنَالُ (يَنَلْنَ)

6.3.3 Examples of Form I hollow verbs in context

يعيش مرحلة انتقالية.

ya-^ʿiish-u marHalat-an-i ntiqaaliyyat-an.

It is living [through] a transitional stage.

عادوا إليها.

ʿaad-uu ʿilay-haa.

They returned to it.

لا أفهم ماذا تقول.

laa ʿa-fham-u maadhaa ta-quul-u.

I don't understand what you are saying.

وعلى الدولة أن تقوم بدورها.

wa-ʿalaa l-dawlat-i ʿan ta-quum-a

bi-dawri-haa.

It is up to the state to undertake its role.

7 Defective verb root (*al-fiʿl al-naaqiS* الفعل الناقص)

Defective verb roots are ones where the final consonant is either *waaw* or *yaaʿ*. These final semi-consonants may take on various forms and even seem to disappear under certain circumstances. In the past tense citation form, these roots all have final *ʿalif*. Roots where *yaaʿ* is the final consonant appear with *ʿalif maqSuura* or *yaaʿ*; roots where *waaw* is the final consonant are written with *ʿalif Tawiila*.¹¹

7.1 *waaw*-defective roots

to appear, to seem	<i>badaa/ya-bduu</i>	بَدَا / يَبْدُو
to hope; wish; request	<i>rajaa/ya-rjuu</i>	رَجَا / يَرْجُو
to call, invite	<i>daʿaa/ya-dʿuu</i>	دَعَا / يَدْعُو

7.2 *yaaʿ* defective roots

Yaaʿ defective Form I verbs fall into two main categories: ones that end in *-aa* (*ʿalif maqSuura*) and ones that end with *yaaʿ*. The ones ending in *-aa* usually inflect in the present tense with *-ii*; the ones that end with *yaaʿ* in the past tense usually take *-aa* in the present tense. A few verbs take *-aa* in both the past and the present.

7.2.1 *-aa/-ii* verbs

to build	<i>banaa/ya-bnii</i>	بَنَى / يَبْنِي
to be sufficient	<i>kafaa/ya-kfii</i>	كَفَى / يَكْفِي
to walk	<i>mashaa/ya-mshii</i>	مَشَى / يَمْشِي

7.2.2 *-ya/-aa* verbs

to remain	<i>baqiy-a/ya-bqaa</i>	بَقِيَ / يَبْقَى
to forget	<i>nasiy-a/ya-nsaa</i>	نَسِيَ / يَنْسَى
to encounter	<i>laqiy-a/ya-lqaa</i>	لَقِيَ / يَلْقَى

¹¹ For a concise phonological analysis of hollow and defective verbs, see Timothy Mitchell 1981.

7.2.3 -aa/-aa verbs

to move forward; to strive *sa^ʿaa/ya-s^ʿaa* سَعَى / يَسْعَى

7.2.4 -ya/-ii verb

to be near; to follow; to govern *waliy-a/ya-līi* وَلِيَ / يَلِي

7.3 Examples of Form I defective verbs in context

يقضون لياليهم في الصلاة.
ya-qDuuna layaali-him fī l-Salaat-i.
They spend their nights in prayer.

هذا لا يكفي.
haadhaa laa ya-kfīi.
This is not enough.

ستبقى طويلاً في ذاكرة العالم.
sa-ta-bqaa Tawiil-an fī dhaakirat-i l-^ʿaalam-i
It will remain long in the world's memory.

تنمو ببطء.
ta-nmuu bi-buT^ʿ-in.
They grow slowly.

شكا عدد من الناخبين.
shakaa ^ʿadad-un min-a l-naaxib-iina.
A number of voters complained.

نرجو الاتصال بالإدارة.
na-rjuu l-ittiSaal-a bi-l-^ʿidaarat-i.
We would like to contact the management.

8 Doubly weak or “mixed” verb root

Doubly weak verb roots have semi-consonants and/or hamza in two places, sometimes as the first and third consonants, and sometimes as the second and third. They are not many in number, but some of them are frequently used:

8.1 Hollow and hamzated

to come *jaa^ʿ-a (ji^ʿ-tu)/ya-jīi^ʿ-u (ya-jī^ʿ-na)* جاءَ (جِئْتُ) / يَجِيئُ (يَجِئْنَ)
(root: j-y-^ʿ)

8.2 Hamzated and defective

to come *^ʿataa/ya-^ʿtīi* أتى / يَأْتِي to see *ra^ʿaa/ya-raa* رأى / يَرَى
(root: ^ʿ-t-y) (root: r-^ʿ-y)

8.3 Assimilated and defective (*al-fiʿl al-lafiif al-mafruuq* الفعل اللفيف المفروق)

These roots have *waaw* or *yaa^ʿ* in the first and third root consonants.

to perceive, be aware of *wa^ʿaa/ya-^ʿīi* وَعَى / يَعِي
(root: w-^ʿ-y)

to be near; to follow; to govern *waliya/yalīi* وَلِيَ / يَلِي
(root: w-l-y)

8.4 Hollow and defective (*al-fiʿl al-lafiif al-maqrūn* الفعل اللفييف المقرُون)

Where a root is both hollow and defective, the medial root semi-consonant (usually *waaw*) appears as a regular consonant:

to intend	<i>nawaa/ya-nwii</i> نَوَى / يَنْوِي	to narrate	<i>rawaa/ya-rwii</i> رَوَى / يَرَوِي
(root: n-w-y)		(root: r-w-y)	

8.5 Examples of Form I doubly weak verbs in context

ستري!	لأنِّي أهوي ركوب الخيل	عليه أن يأتي إلى هنا.
<i>sa-taraa!</i>	<i>liʾann-ii ʾa-hwii rukuub-a</i>	<i>ʿalay-hi ʾan ya-ʾtiy-a ʾilaa hunaa.</i>
You'll see!	<i>l-xayl-i</i>	He has to come here.
	because I am fond of riding	
	horses	

9 Verbal nouns of Form I

Form I verbal nouns have many variations of pattern.¹² Wright lists forty-four possible verbal noun patterns for Form I or as he terms it, “the ground form” of the ordinary trilateral verb (1967, I:110–112); Ziadeh and Winder (1957, 71–72) list eighteen of the most commonly used ones in MSA. ʿAbd al-Latif, ʿUmar and Zahran give an extensive list (in Arabic) with examples and some explanations (1997, 83–86). To some extent, particular verbal noun patterns may be associated with particular Form I verb stem types. For a discussion of this, see Blachère and Demombynes 1975, 78–84. See also Bateson 2003, 15–21 for a general discussion of Arabic noun derivation. The most common forms of Form I verbal nouns are listed here by root type. Sometimes the meaning of the verbal noun is abstract and sometimes it has acquired a specific, concrete denotation.

Note that many verbs have more than one verbal noun. In this case, the nouns usually have different connotations. Owing to space restrictions, I have not listed all verbal noun options for Form I, only typical examples.

9.1 Form I sound root verbal nouns

The most common verbal noun patterns of Form I regular or sound verbs are:

faʿl

support	<i>daʿm</i>	دَعَمَ	jumping	<i>qafz</i>	قَفَزَ
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¹² Beeston states (1970, 35): “Morphologically, the verbal abstracts which match primary verbs have unpredictable word-patterns, and constitute lexical items.” ʿAbd al-Latif, ʿUmar and Zahran declare that “The verbal nouns of the base form are many and varied and cannot be known except by resorting to language [reference] books” *maSaadir-u l-thulaathiyy-i kathiirat-un wa-mutanawwaʿ-at-un laa tu-ʿraf-u ʾillaa bi-l-rujuuʿ-i ʾilaa kutub-i l-lughat-i* (1997, 83).

fa'al

danger	xaTar	خَطَر	honor	sharaf	شَرَف
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fu'l

distance	bu'd	بُعْد	life-span, age	'umr	عُمْر
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fi'l

thinking	fikr	فِكْر	root	jidhr~jadhr	جَذْر
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fi'la ~ fu'la ~ fa'la

error, mistake	ghalTa	غَلْطَة	expertise	xibra	خَبْرَة
wisdom	Hikma	حِكْمَة	license, permit	ruksa	رُخْصَة

fu'uul

attendance	HuDuur	حُضُور	feeling	shu'uur	شُعُور
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fu'uula

heroism	buTuula	بُطُولَة	flexibility	murruuna	مُرُونَة
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fi'aal

mixture	mizaaq	مِزَاج	scope, sphere	niTaaq	نِطَاق
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fi'aala ~ fa'aala

writing	kitaaba	كِتَابَة	studying	diraasa	دِرَاسَة
splendor	faxaama	فَخَامَة	happiness	sa'aada	سَعَادَة

fu'laan ~ fi'laan

forgiveness	ghufraan	غُفْرَان	loss; losing	fiqdaan	فِقْدَان
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maf'il ~ maf'ila

logic	manTiq	مَنْطِق	knowledge; knowing	ma'rifa	مَعْرِفَة
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9.2 Form I geminate root verbal nouns

Common verbal noun patterns for Form I geminate verbs include:

fa'l ~ fu'l

pilgrimage	Hajj	حَجّ	response	radd	رَدّ
solution	Hall	حَلّ	friendship	wudd	وُدّ

fa'al

number	^ʿ adad	عَدَدٌ	reason	sabab	سَبَبٌ
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fa'uula

necessity	Daruura	ضَرُورَةٌ
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fa'aala

indication	dalaala	دَلَالَةٌ
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fi'la

paucity	qilla	قِلَّةٌ
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9.3 Form I hamzated verbal nouns

fa'l, fu'l, fi'l

command	^ʿ amr	أَمْرٌ	part	juz'	جُزْءٌ
light; brightness	Daw'	ضَوْءٌ	burden	^ʿ ib'	عِبْءٌ

fu'aal

question	su'aal	سُؤَالٌ
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fi'aala , fa'aala

reading	qiraa'a	قِرَاءَةٌ	beginning	badaa'a/bidaaya	بُدَايَةٌ
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fu'uul

growth	nushuu'	نُشُوءٌ	refuge	lujuu'	لُجُوءٌ
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9.4 Form I Assimilated root verbal nouns

^ʿila: In this form of verbal noun, assimilated roots delete the first root semi-consonant.

direction	jiha	جِهَةٌ	trust	thiqa	ثِقَةٌ
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fa'l

promise	wa'd	وَعْدٌ	delegation	wafd	وَفْدٌ
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fu'uul

arrival	wuSuul	وُصُولٌ	clarity	wuDuuH	وُضُوحٌ
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fi'aala

agency	wikaala	وِكَالَةٌ	sovereignty; province	wilaaya	وِلَايَةٌ
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fi^ʿlaanfeeling; ecstasy *wijdaan* وَجْدَان**mafa^ʿla**wishing, wanting *mawadda* مَوَدَّة**9.5 Form I hollow root verbal nouns**

Common hollow verb verbal noun patterns include:

fa^ʿl

victory	<i>fawz</i>	فَوْز	shame	<i>ʿayb</i>	عَيْب
sleep	<i>nawm</i>	نَوْم	living; life	<i>ʿaysh</i>	عَيْش

fa^ʿla

revolution	<i>thawra</i>	ثَوْرَة	return	<i>ʿawda</i>	عَوْدَة
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fu^ʿl: This pattern in combination with a hollow root yields a long vowel /uu/ in the middle of the word.

length	<i>Tuul</i>	طُول	intensity; lute	<i>ʿuud</i>	عُود
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fi^ʿaal and fi^ʿaala: When hollow verbs use this pattern for the verbal noun, the medial semi-consonant often takes the form of *yaa*’ even if the root consonant is *waaw*.¹³

establishing, setting up (root: q-w-m)	<i>qiyaam</i>	قِيَام	mathematics; sports (root: r-w-D)	<i>riyaaDa</i>	رِيَاضَة
visit (root: z-w-r)	<i>ziyaara</i>	زِيَارَة	increase (root: z-y-d)	<i>ziyaada</i>	زِيَادَة

fa^ʿlaachaos; disorder *fawDaa* فَوْضَى**fa^ʿalaan**

flying	<i>Tayaraan</i>	طَيَّارَان	flooding	<i>fayaDaan</i>	فَيَّضَان
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mafaal ~ mafiil ~ mafiila: These are *miimii maSdars*.

destiny	<i>maSiir</i>	مَصِير	obtaining	<i>manaal</i>	مَنَال
livelihood	<i>ma^ʿiisha</i>	مَعِيشَة	procession	<i>masiira</i>	مَسِيرَة

¹³ The phonological sequence /-iw-/ is usually avoided in Arabic. Therefore hypothetical forms like *ziwaara and *qiwaam shift to become *ziyaara* ‘visit’ or *qiyaam* ‘establishing.’

9.6 Form I defective root verbal nouns

*faʿl*pardon;
kindness

ʿafw

عَفْو

negation

nafy

نَفْي

faʿaal ~ fiʿaal: In this verbal noun pattern, the final root semi-consonant shifts to hamza.

building

binaaʾ

بِنَاء

space

faDaaʾ

فَضَاء

singing

ghinaaʾ

غِنَاء

meeting

liqaaʾ

لِقَاء

fiʿaala

building

binaaya

بِنَايَة

protection

Himaaya

حِمَايَة

fuʿuul: This pattern is often found with final-waaw verbs. The combination of the long /uu/ vowel in this pattern with the final waaw consonant yields a doubled waaw:

height,
altitude

ʿuluww

عُلُو

growth

numuww

نُمُو

faʿlaa: Because these nouns terminate with an added /-aa/ suffix, they are feminine in gender.

piety

taqwaa

تَقْوَى

complaint

shakwaa

شَكْوَى

*fiʿlaan ~ fuʿlaan*aggression;
hostility

ʿudwaan

عُدْوَان

forgetting;
oblivion

nisyaan

نِسْيَان

mafʿan (mafʿal (مفعّل)

meaning

maʿnan

مَعْنَى

effort; striving

masʿan

مَسْعَى

9.7 Form I doubly weak or 'mixed' verb roots

9.7.1 Hollow and hamzated

mafʿil:

coming

majjiʾ

مَجِيء

9.7.2 Defective and hamzated

faʿl

opinion

raʾy

رَأْي

fuʿla

seeing

ruʾya

رُؤْيَة

9.7.3 Hollow and defective

fi^ʿla and **fa^ʿl**: In these verbal noun patterns, the medial *waaw* assimilates to the *yaaʾ*, yielding a double *yaaʾ*:

intent	niyya	نِيَّة	ironing	kayy	كَيَّ
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When a hollow root combines with a defective root, the medial *waaw* is maintained in these verbal noun patterns:

fi^ʿaala:

narrative	riwaaya	رِوَايَة	hobby; amateurism	hiwaaya	هَوَايَة
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fa^ʿaal

medicine, remedy	dawaaʾ	دَوَاء
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9.8 Form I verbal nouns in context

قبل السباحة إلى البحر
qabl-a l-sibaaHat-i ʾilaa l-baHr-i
before swimming to the sea

نحتاج إلى مجهر لرؤيته.
na-Htaaj-u ʾilaa mijhar-in li-ruʾyat-i-hi
We need a microscope to see it.

قيام دولة القانون
qiyaam-u dawlat-i l-qaanuun-i
establishing a state of law

ما معنى هذا؟
maa ma^ʿnaa haadhaaʾ
What is the meaning of this?

10 Form I participles

10.1 Form I active participle (AP): *faaʿil* فاعل

APs that refer to living beings take the natural gender of the referent; APs that refer to non-living things may be either masculine or feminine. For more detail on AP morphology and syntax see Chapter 6 on participles. Examples are provided here of how the various root types fit into the pattern. The items are categorized as either noun or adjective, but many have both noun and adjective functions.

10.1.1 Strong/regular root

Nouns:

writer	kaatib/ kuttab	كاتب / كُتَّاب	rule; base	qaa ^ʿ ida/ qawaa ^ʿ id	قَاعِدَة / قَوَاعِد
researcher	baaHith/ -uuna	باحث / باحثون	university	jaami ^ʿ a/ -aat	جَامِعَة / جَامِعَات

Adjectives:

former	saabiq	سَابِق	empty	faarigh	فَارِغ
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10.1.2 Geminate root: *faa^cc*

In the active participle of the geminate root, the usual form of the AP is *faa^cc*, that is, the second and third radicals are together (written with *shadda*), with no vowel between them.

Noun:

commodity; material	maadda/mawaadd ¹⁴	مَادَّة / مَوَادَّ
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Adjective:

dry	jaaff	جَافٌ	hot	Haarr	حَارٌّ
important	haamm	هَامٌّ	urgent, pressing	maass	مَاسٌّ

10.1.3 Hamzated root

Certain spelling rules for the *hamza* apply in the AP *hamzated* root, depending where in the word the *hamza* occurs.

Noun:

reader	qaari ³ /qurraa ³	قَارِي / قُرَّاء
accident; emergency	Taari ³ a/Tawaari ³	طَارِئَة / طَوَارِي
refugee	laaji ³ / laaji ³ uuna	لَاجِي / لَاجِيُون

Adjective:

final; last	³ aaxir ¹⁵ / ³ awaaxir~ ³ aaxir-uuna	آخِر / أَوَاخِر ~ آخِرُون
calm, peaceful	haadi ³	هَادِي

10.1.4 Assimilated root: *faa^cil*

Assimilated roots are regular in Form I active participle formation.

Noun:

mother	waalida/-aat	وَالِدَة / وَالِدَات	import/s	waarid/-aat	وَارِد / وَارِدَات
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¹⁴ The plural *mawaadd* is the form that the plural pattern *fawaa^cil* takes in geminate nouns because of the phonological restriction on sequences that include a vowel between identical consonants. **mawaadid* → *mawaadd*. It is diptote (CaCaaCiC pattern).

¹⁵ From the hamzated root ³-x-r; the initial *hamza* followed by the long /aa/ of the *faa^cil* pattern creates /³aa/, spelled with ³*alif madda*.

father *waalid/-uuna* والد / والدون duty; homework *waajib/-aat* واجب / واجبات

Adjective:

wide, broad *waasi^c* واسع dry; arid *yaabis* يابس

10.1.5 Hollow root: *faa³il*

Hollow roots of Form I have *hamza* between the long /aa/ and the short /i/ of the AP pattern.

Noun:

visitor/s	<i>zaa³ir/zuwwaar</i>	زائر / زوار
fluid; liquid/s	<i>saa³il/sawaa³il</i>	سائل / سوائل
being/s	<i>kaa³in/-aat</i>	كائن / كائنات
circle/s; department/s	<i>daa³ira/dawaa³ir</i>	دايرة / دوائر

Adjective:

visiting *zaa³ir/zaa³ir-uuna* زائر / زائرون dreadful *haa³il* هائل

10.1.6 Defective root: *faa^c-in* فاع

The defective root shows its weakness in the AP form by having its final *waaw* or *yaa³* in the form of *kasrataan* on the base masculine form, putting it into the defective declension. In feminine APs the weakness is regularized into an /-iya / ending.

Noun:

judge/s	<i>qaaDin/quDaah</i>	قاضي / قضاة
corner/s	<i>zaawiya/zawaayaa</i>	زاوية / زوايا
club/s	<i>naadin/ ³andiya ~ nawaad-in</i>	ناد / أندية ~ نواد
pedestrian/s; infantry	<i>maashin/mushaat</i>	ماش / مشاة

Adjective:

walking	<i>maashin</i>	ماش	last; past	<i>maaDin</i>	ماضي
remaining	<i>baaqin</i>	باق	adequate	<i>kaa³fin</i>	كاف

10.1.7 Examples of Form I AP in context

المشاريع الباقية	في حاجة ماسة إلى المساعدة
<i>al-mashaarii^c-u l-baaqiyat-u</i>	<i>fii Haajat-in maassat-in ³ilaa l-musaa^cadat-i</i>
the remaining projects	in urgent need of help

الثلاثاء الجاري
al-thulaathaa'-u l-jaarii
this ('current') Tuesday

قوافل أيام زمان
qawaafil-u 'ayyam-i zamaan-in
the caravans of yesteryear

في جلسة طارئة
fii jalsat-in Taari'at-in
at an emergency session

ظَلَّتْ في غيبوبة تامة.
Zall-at fii ghaybuubat-in taammat-in.
She remained in a complete coma.

10.2 Form I passive participle (PP): maf'uul مَفْعُول

The maf'uul pattern is maintained in most root types except for the hollow and defective:

10.2.1 Strong/regular root

Noun:

concept/s	mafhuum/mafaahiim	مَفْهُوم / مفاهيم
plan/s	mashruu' /aat~mashaarii'	مَشْرُوع / مشروعات ~ مشاريع
prisoner/s	masjuun/-uuna	مَسْجُون / مسجونون
group/s	majmuu'a/-aat	مَجْمُوعَة / مجموعات

Adjective:

famous	mashhuur	مَشْهُور	reserved	maHjuuz	مَحْجُوز
blessed	mabruuk	مَبْرُوك	audible	masmuu'	مَسْمُوع

10.2.2 Geminate root

Noun:

yield; return	marduud	مَرْدُود	manuscript/s	maxTuut/ aat	مَخْطُوط / مخطوطات
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Adjective:

lucky	maHZuuz	مَحْظُوظ	beloved	maHbuub	مَحْبُوب
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10.2.3 Hamzated root

Noun:

official	mas'uul	مَسْئُول	readable	maqrui'	مَقْرُوء
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Adjective:

taken	ma'xuudh	مَأْخُوذ	peopled	ma'huul	مَأْهُول
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10.2.4 Assimilated root

Noun:

topic, subject	<i>mawDuu^c</i>	مَوْضُوع
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Adjective:

present; found	<i>mawjuud</i>	مَوْجُود	inherited	<i>mawruuth</i>	مَوْرُوث
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10.2.5 Hollow root

In the hollow root, the *maf^cuul* pattern becomes *mafuul* for roots whose middle radical is *waaw*, and *mafiil* for roots whose middle radical is *yaa[?]*:

blamed	<i>maluum</i> (l-w-m)	مَلُوم	sold	<i>mabii^c</i> (b-y- ^c)	مَبِيع
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10.2.6 Defective root

In the defective root, the *maf^cuul* PP pattern becomes *maf^cuww* for roots whose final radical is *waaw* and *maf^ciyy* for roots whose final radical is *yaa[?]*:

Adjective:

invited	<i>mad^cuww</i> (d- ^c -w)	مَدْعُو	stuffed	<i>maHshuww</i> (H-sh-w) ¹⁶	مَحْشُو
forgotten	<i>mansiyy</i> (n-s-y)	مَنْسِي	spoken	<i>maHkiyy</i> (H-k-y)	مَحْكِي

10.2.7 Examples of Form I PP's in context

طاولة محجوزة <i>Taawilat-un maHjuuzat-un</i> a reserved table	من مصادر موثوق بها <i>min maSaadir-a mawthuuq-in bi-haa</i> from trusted sources
تمور مكبوسة <i>tumuur-un makbuusat-un</i> pressed dates	خطها مقروء. <i>xaTT-u-haa maqrui[?]-un.</i> Her handwriting is legible.
محشو بالقش <i>maHshuww-un bi-l-qashsh-i</i> stuffed with straw	العربية المحكية <i>al-^carabiyyat-u l-maHkiyyat-u</i> spoken Arabic

¹⁶ In spoken Arabic this PP is often converted to *maHshiyy*, used especially when referring to stuffed meat or other food items.

Form I Sound root: فَعَلَ ، يَفْعَلُ AP: فَاعِلٍ PP: مَفْعُولٍ VN: فَعِلَ 'to do; to make'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	فَعَلْتُ	أَفْعَلُ	أَفْعَلْ	أَفْعَلْ		فُعِلْتُ	أُفْعَلُ
أَنْتَ	فَعَلْتَ	تَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلْ	تَفْعَلْ	افْعَلْ	فُعِلْتَ	تُفْعَلُ
أَنْتِ	فَعَلْتِ	تَفْعَلِينَ	تَفْعَلِي	تَفْعَلِي	افْعَلِي	فُعِلْتِ	تُفْعَلِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	فَعَلْتُمَا	تَفْعَلَانِ	تَفْعَلَا	تَفْعَلَا	افْعَلَا	فُعِلْتُمَا	تُفْعَلَانِ
هُوَ	فَعَلَ	يَفْعَلُ	يَفْعَلْ	يَفْعَلْ		فُعِلَ	يُفْعَلُ
هِيَ	فَعَلَتْ	تَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلْ	تَفْعَلْ		فُعِلَتْ	تُفْعَلُ
هُمَا-m	فَعَلَا	يَفْعَلَانِ	يَفْعَلَا	يَفْعَلَا		فُعِلَا	يُفْعَلَانِ
هُمَا-f	فَعَلَتَا	تَفْعَلَانِ	تَفْعَلَا	تَفْعَلَا		فُعِلَتَا	تُفْعَلَانِ
نَحْنُ	فَعَلْنَا	نَفْعَلُ	نَفْعَلْ	نَفْعَلْ		فُعِلْنَا	نُفْعَلُ
أَنْتُمْ	فَعَلْتُمْ	تَفْعَلُونَ	تَفْعَلُوا	تَفْعَلُوا	افْعَلُوا	فُعِلْتُمْ	تُفْعَلُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	فَعَلْتُنَّ	تَفْعَلْنَ	تَفْعَلْنَ	تَفْعَلْنَ	افْعَلْنَ	فُعِلْتُنَّ	تُفْعَلْنَ
هُمْ	فَعَلُوا	يَفْعَلُونَ	يَفْعَلُوا	يَفْعَلُوا		فُعِلُوا	يُفْعَلُونَ
هُنَّ	فَعَلْنَ	يَفْعَلْنَ	يَفْعَلْنَ	يَفْعَلْنَ		فُعِلْنَ	يُفْعَلْنَ

Form I Geminate root: دَلَّ , $\text{يَدُلُّ$ AP: دال PP: مدلول VN: دلالة 'to indicate'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	دَلَّلْتُ	أَدُلُّ	أَدُلَّ	أَدُلَّ		دُلِّلْتُ	أُدَلُّ
أنتَ	دَلَّلْتَ	تَدُلُّ	تَدُلَّ	تَدُلَّ	دَلَّ / أَدُلُّ	دُلِّلْتَ	تُدَلُّ
أنتِ	دَلَّلْتِ	تَدُلِينَ	تَدُلِّي	تَدُلِّي	دُلِّي	دُلِّلْتِ	تَدُلِّينَ
أنتما -m/f	دَلَّلْتُمَا	تَدُلَانِ	تَدُلَا	تَدُلَا	دُلَا	دُلِّلْتُمَا	تَدُلَانِ
هو	دَلَّ	يَدُلُّ	يَدُلَّ	يَدُلَّ		دُلِّ	يُدَلُّ
هي	دَلَّتْ	تَدُلُّ	تَدُلَّ	تَدُلَّ		دُلِّتْ	تُدَلُّ
هما -m	دَلَّا	يَدُلَانِ	يَدُلَا	يَدُلَا		دُلَّا	يُدَلَانِ
هما -f	دَلَّتَا	تَدُلَانِ	تَدُلَا	تَدُلَا		دُلَّتَا	تُدَلَانِ
نحنُ	دَلَّلْنَا	نَدُلُّ	نَدُلَّ	نَدُلَّ		دُلِّلْنَا	نُدَلُّ
أنتم	دَلَّلْتُمْ	تَدُلُونَ	تَدُلُوا	تَدُلُوا	دُلُوا	دُلِّلْتُمْ	تَدُلُونَ
أنتنَّ	دَلَّلْتُنَّ	تَدُلْنَ	تَدُلْنَ	تَدُلْنَ	أَدُلْنَ	دُلِّلْتُنَّ	تَدُلْنَ
هم	دَلُّوا	يَدُلُونَ	يَدُلُوا	يَدُلُوا		دُلُّوا	يُدَلُونَ
هنَّ	دَلَلْنَ	يَدُلْنَ	يَدُلْنَ	يَدُلْنَ		دُلِلْنَ	يُدَلْنَ

Form I hamza-initial root: أَكَلَ , يَأْكُلُ AP: آكِلٌ PP: مَأْكُولٌ VN: أَكَلَ 'to eat'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَكَلْتُ	أَكُلُ	أَكُلَ	أَكُلْ		أُكِلْتُ	أَوْكَلُ
أَنْتَ	أَكَلْتَ	تَأْكُلُ	تَأْكُلَ	تَأْكُلْ	كُلْ	أُكِلْتَ	تَوْكَلْ
أَنْتِ	أَكَلْتِ	تَأْكُلِينَ	تَأْكُلِي	تَأْكُلِي	كُلِي	أُكِلْتِ	تَوْكَلِينَ
أَنْتُمَا -m/f	أَكَلْتُمَا	تَأْكُلَانِ	تَأْكُلَا	تَأْكُلَا	كُلَا	أُكِلْتُمَا	تَوْكَلَانِ
هُوَ	أَكَلَ	يَأْكُلُ	يَأْكُلَ	يَأْكُلْ		أُكِلَ	يُوكَلْ
هِيَ	أَكَلَتْ	تَأْكُلُ	تَأْكُلَ	تَأْكُلْ		أُكِلَتْ	تَوْكَلْ
هُمَا -m	أَكَلَا	يَأْكُلَانِ	يَأْكُلَا	يَأْكُلَا		أُكِلَا	يُوكَلُونِ
هُمَا -f	أَكَلَتَا	تَأْكُلَانِ	تَأْكُلَا	تَأْكُلَا		أُكِلَتَا	تَوْكَلَانِ
نَحْنُ	أَكَلْنَا	نَأْكُلُ	نَأْكُلَ	نَأْكُلْ		أُكِلْنَا	نُوكَلْ
أَنْتُمْ	أَكَلْتُمْ	تَأْكُلُونَ	تَأْكُلُوا	تَأْكُلُوا	كُلُوا	أُكِلْتُمْ	تَوْكَلُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	أَكَلْتُنَّ	تَأْكُلْنَ	تَأْكُلْنَ	تَأْكُلْنَ	كُلْنَ	أُكِلْتُنَّ	تَوْكَلْنَ
هُمْ	أَكَلُوا	يَأْكُلُونَ	يَأْكُلُوا	يَأْكُلُوا		أُكِلُوا	يُوكَلُونَ
هُنَّ	أَكَلْنَ	يَأْكُلْنَ	يَأْكُلْنَ	يَأْكُلْنَ		أُكِلْنَ	يُوكَلْنَ

Form I hamza-medial root: يَسْأَلُ ، سَأَلَ AP: سائل PP: مَسْئُول VN: سَوَّال 'to ask'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	سَأَلْتُ	أَسْأَلُ	أَسْأَلَ	أَسْأَلْ		سُئِلْتُ	أُسْأَلُ
أَنْتَ	سَأَلْتَ	تَسْأَلُ	تَسْأَلَ	تَسْأَلْ	اسْأَلْ	سُئِلْتَ	تُسْأَلُ
أَنْتِ	سَأَلْتِ	تَسْأَلِينَ	تَسْأَلِي	تَسْأَلِي	اسْأَلِي	سُئِلْتِ	تُسْأَلِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	سَأَلْتُمَا	تَسْأَلَانِ	تَسْأَلَا	تَسْأَلَا	اسْأَلَا	سُئِلْتُمَا	تُسْأَلَانِ
هُوَ	سَأَلَ	يَسْأَلُ	يَسْأَلَ	يَسْأَلْ		سُئِلَ	يُسْأَلُ
هِيَ	سَأَلَتْ	تَسْأَلُ	تَسْأَلَ	تَسْأَلْ		سُئِلَتْ	تُسْأَلَانِ
هُمَا-m	سَأَلَا	يَسْأَلَانِ	يَسْأَلَا	يَسْأَلَا		سُئِلَا	يُسْأَلَانِ
هُمَا-f	سَأَلَتَا	تَسْأَلَانِ	تَسْأَلَا	تَسْأَلَا		سُئِلْتُمَا	تُسْأَلَانِ
نَحْنُ	سَأَلْنَا	نَسْأَلُ	نَسْأَلَ	نَسْأَلْ		سُئِلْنَا	نُسْأَلُ
أَنْتُمْ	سَأَلْتُمْ	تَسْأَلُونَ	تَسْأَلُوا	تَسْأَلُوا	اسْأَلُوا	سُئِلْتُمْ	تُسْأَلُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	سَأَلْتُنَّ	تَسْأَلْنَ	تَسْأَلْنَ	تَسْأَلْنَ		سُئِلْتُنَّ	تُسْأَلْنَ
هُمْ	سَأَلُوا	يَسْأَلُونَ	يَسْأَلُوا	يَسْأَلُوا		سُئِلُوا	يُسْأَلُونَ
هُنَّ	سَأَلْنَ	يَسْأَلْنَ	يَسْأَلْنَ	يَسْأَلْنَ	اسْأَلْنَ	سُئِلْنَ	يُسْأَلْنَ

Form I hamza-final root: قَرَأَ، يَقْرَأُ AP: قَارِئٌ PP: مَقْرُوءٌ VN: قِرَاءَةٌ 'to read'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	قَرَأْتُ	أَقْرَأُ	أَقْرَأْ	أَقْرَأْ		قُرِئْتُ	أُقْرَأُ
أَنْتَ	قَرَأْتَ	تَقْرَأُ	تَقْرَأْ	تَقْرَأْ	اقْرَأْ	قُرِئْتَ	تُقْرَأُ
أَنْتِ	قَرَأْتِ	تَقْرئينَ	تَقْرئِي	تَقْرئِي	اقْرئِي	قُرِئْتِ	تُقْرئينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	قَرَأْتُمَا	تَقْرَآنِ	تَقْرَآ	تَقْرَآ	اقْرَآ	قُرِئْتُمَا	تُقْرَآنِ
هُوَ	قَرَأَ	يَقْرَأُ	يَقْرَأْ	يَقْرَأْ		قُرِئَ	يُقْرَأُ
هِيَ	قَرَأَتْ	تَقْرَأُ	تَقْرَأْ	تَقْرَأْ		قُرِئَتْ	تُقْرَأُ
هُمَا-m	قَرَأَا	يَقْرَآنِ	يَقْرَآ	يَقْرَآ		قُرِئْتُمَا	يُقْرَآنِ
هُمَا-f	قَرَأَتَا	تَقْرَآنِ	تَقْرَآ	تَقْرَآ		قُرِئَتَا	تُقْرَآنِ
نَحْنُ	قَرَأْنَا	نَقْرَأُ	نَقْرَأْ	نَقْرَأْ		قُرِئْنَا	نُقْرَأُ
أَنْتُمْ	قَرَأْتُمْ	تَقْرَؤُونَ	تَقْرَؤُوا	تَقْرَؤُوا	اقْرَؤُوا	قُرِئْتُمْ	تُقْرَؤُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	قَرَأْتُنَّ	تَقْرَآنَ	تَقْرَآنَ	تَقْرَآنَ	اقْرَآنَ	قُرِئْتُنَّ	تُقْرَآنَ
هُمْ	قَرَأُوا	يَقْرَؤُونَ	يَقْرَؤُوا	يَقْرَؤُوا		قُرِئُوا	يُقْرَؤُونَ
هُنَّ	قَرَأْنَ	يَقْرَآنَ	يَقْرَآنَ	يَقْرَآنَ		قُرِئْنَ	يُقْرَآنَ

Form I Assimilated root: **وَضَعَ، يَضَعُ** AP: **واضع** PP: **مَوْضِع** VN: **وَضَعَ** 'to put, to place'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	وَضَعْتُ	أَضَعُ	أَضَعَ	أَضَعْ		وُضِعْتُ	أُوضَعُ
أَنْتَ	وَضَعْتَ	تَضَعُ	تَضَعَ	تَضَعْ	ضَعْ	وُضِعْتَ	تُوضَعُ
أَنْتِ	وَضَعْتِ	تَضَعِينَ	تَضَعِي	تَضَعِي	ضَعِي	وُضِعْتِ	تُوضَعِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	وَضَعْتُمَا	تَضَعَانِ	تَضَعَا	تَضَعَا	ضَعَا	وُضِعْتُمَا	تُوضَعَانِ
هُوَ	وَضَعَ	يَضَعُ	يَضَعَ	يَضَعْ		وُضِعَ	يُوضَعُ
هِيَ	وَضَعَتْ	تَضَعُ	تَضَعَ	تَضَعْ		وُضِعَتْ	تُوضَعُ
هُمَا-m	وَضَعَا	يَضَعَانِ	يَضَعَا	يَضَعَا		وُضِعَا	يُوضَعَانِ
هُمَا-f	وَضَعَتَا	تَضَعَانِ	تَضَعَا	تَضَعَا		وُضِعَتَا	تُوضَعَانِ
نَحْنُ	وَضَعْنَا	نَضَعُ	نَضَعَ	نَضَعْ		وُضِعْنَا	نُوضَعُ
أَنْتُمْ	وَضَعْتُمْ	تَضَعُونَ	تَضَعُوا	تَضَعُوا	ضَعُوا	وُضِعْتُمْ	تُوضَعُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	وَضَعْتُنَّ	تَضَعْنَ	تَضَعْنَ	تَضَعْنَ	ضَعْنَ	وُضِعْتُنَّ	تُوضَعْنَ
هُمْ	وَضَعُوا	يَضَعُونَ	يَضَعُوا	يَضَعُوا		وُضِعُوا	يُوضَعُوا
هُنَّ	وَضَعْنَ	يَضَعْنَ	يَضَعْنَ	يَضَعْنَ		وُضِعْنَ	يُوضَعْنَ

Form I Hollow, Medial waaw root: زار، يزور AP: زائر PP: مزور VN: زيارة 'to visit'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	زُرْتُ	أزُورُ	أزورَ	أزُرْ		زِرْتُ	أُزارُ
أنتَ	زُرْتَ	تزورُ	تزورَ	تزُرْ	زُرْ	زِرْتَ	تُزارُ
أنتِ	زُرْتِ	تَورينَ	تَوري	تَوري	زوري	زِرْتِ	تُزارينَ
أنتما-m/f	زُرتُما	تَورانِ	تَورا	تَورا	زورا	زِرْتُما	تُزارانِ
هو	زارَ	يزورُ	يزورَ	يزُرْ		زيرَ	يُزارُ
هي	زارَتْ	تزورُ	تزورَ	تزُرْ		زيرَتْ	تُزارُ
هما-m	زارا	يزورانِ	يزورا	يزورا		زيرا	يُزارانِ
هما-f	زارتا	تَورانِ	تَورا	تَورا		زيرتا	تُزارانِ
نحنُ	زُرنا	نَورُ	نَورَ	نَورْ		زِرنا	نُزارُ
أنتم	زُرتُم	تَورونَ	تَوروا	تَوروا	زوروا	زِرْتُم	تُزارونَ
أنتنَّ	زُرتنَّ	تَورنَ	تَورنَ	تَورنَ	زرنَ	زِرْتنَّ	تُزارنَ
هم	زاروا	يزورونَ	يزوروا	يزوروا		زيروا	يُزارونَ
هنَّ	زرنَ	يزرنَ	يزرنَ	يزرنَ		زرنَ	يُزرنَ

Form I Hollow Medial yaa' root: بَاعَ، يَبِيعُ AP: بَائِعٍ PP: مَبِيعٍ VN: بَيْعٌ 'to sell'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	بِعْتُ	أَبِيعُ	أَبِيعَ	أَبِعْ		بِعْتُ	أُبَاعُ
أَنْتَ	بِعْتَ	تَبِيعُ	تَبِيعَ	تَبِعْ	بِعْ	بِعْتَ	تُبَاعُ
أَنْتِ	بِعْتِ	تَبِيعِينَ	تَبِيعِي	تَبِيعِي	بِيعِي	بِعْتِ	تُبَاعِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	بِعْتُمَا	تَبِيعَانِ	تَبِيعَا	تَبِيعَا	بِيعَا	بِعْتُمَا	تُبَاعَانِ
هُوَ	بَاعَ	يَبِيعُ	يَبِيعَ	يَبِعْ		بِيعَ	يُبَاعُ
هِيَ	بَاعَتْ	تَبِيعُ	تَبِيعَ	تَبِعْ		بِيعَتْ	تُبَاعُ
هُمَا-m	بَاعَا	يَبِيعَانِ	يَبِيعَا	يَبِيعَا		بِيعَا	يُبَاعَانِ
هُمَا-f	بَاعَتَا	تَبِيعَانِ	تَبِيعَا	تَبِيعَا		بِيعَتَا	تُبَاعَانِ
نَحْنُ	بِعْنَا	نَبِيعُ	نَبِيعَ	نَبِعْ		بِعْنَا	نُبَاعُ
أَنْتُمْ	بِعْتُمْ	تَبِيعُونَ	تَبِيعُوا	تَبِيعُوا	بِيعُوا	بِعْتُمْ	تُبَاعُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	بِعْتُنَّ	تَبِيعْنَ	تَبِيعْنَ	تَبِيعْنَ	بِيعْنَ	بِعْتُنَّ	تُبَاعْنَ
هُمْ	بَاعُوا	يَبِيعُونَ	يَبِيعُوا	يَبِيعُوا		بِيعُوا	يُبَاعُونَ
هُنَّ	بِعْنَ	يَبِيعْنَ	يَبِيعْنَ	يَبِيعْنَ		بِعْنَ	يُبْعْنَ

Form I Hollow, Medial 'alif root: خَافَ ، يَخَافُ AP: خَائِفٌ PP: مَخُوفٌ VN: خَوْفٌ 'to fear'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	خَفْتُ	أَخَافُ	أَخَافَ	أَخَفْ		خَفْتُ	أُخَافُ
أَنْتَ	خَفْتَ	تَخَافُ	تَخَافَ	تَخَفْ	خَفْ	خَفْتَ	تُخَافُ
أَنْتِ	خَفْتِ	تَخَافِينَ	تَخَافِي	تَخَافِي	خَافِي	خَفْتِ	تُخَافِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	خَفْتُمَا	تَخَافَانِ	تَخَافَا	تَخَافَا	خَافَا	خَفْتُمَا	تُخَافَانِ
هُوَ	خَافَ	يَخَافُ	يَخَافَ	يَخَفْ		خِيفَ	يُخَافُ
هِيَ	خَافَتْ	تَخَافُ	تَخَافَ	تَخَفْ		خِيفَتْ	تُخَافُ
هُمَا-m	خَافَا	يَخَافَانِ	يَخَافَا	يَخَافَا		خِيفَا	يُخَافَانِ
هُمَا-f	خَافَتَا	تَخَافَانِ	تَخَافَا	تَخَافَا		خِيفَتَا	تُخَافَانِ
نَحْنُ	خَفْنَا	نَخَافُ	نَخَافَ	نَخَفْ		خَفْنَا	نُخَافُ
أَنْتُمْ	خَفْتُمْ	تَخَافُونَ	تَخَافُوا	تَخَافُوا	خَافُوا	خَفْتُمْ	تُخَافُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	خَفْتُنَّ	تَخَفْنَ	تَخَفْنَ	تَخَفْنَ	خَفْنَ	خَفْتُنَّ	تُخَفْنَ
هُمْ	خَافُوا	يَخَافُونَ	يَخَافُوا	يَخَافُوا		خِيفُوا	يُخَافُونَ
هُنَّ	خَفْنَ	يَخَفْنَ	يَخَفْنَ	يَخَفْنَ		خَفْنَ	يُخَفْنَ

Form I Defective root (waaw): دَعَا، يَدْعُو AP: دَاع PP: مَدْعُو VN: دُعَاء / دُعْوَة 'to call, invite'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	دَعَوْتُ	أَدْعُو	أَدْعُو	أَدْعُ		دُعِيتُ	أُدْعَى
أَنْتَ	دَعَوْتَ	تَدْعُو	تَدْعُو	تَدْعُ	ادْعُ	دُعِيتَ	تُدْعَى
أَنْتِ	دَعَوْتِ	تَدْعِينَ	تَدْعِي	تَدْعِي	ادْعِي	دُعِيتِ	تُدْعَيْنَ
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	دَعَوْتُمَا	تَدْعُونِ	تَدْعُوا	تَدْعُوا	ادْعُوا	دُعِيتُمَا	تُدْعَوَانِ
هُوَ	دَعَا	يَدْعُو	يَدْعُو	يَدْعُ		دُعِيَ	يُدْعَى
هِيَ	دَعَتْ	تَدْعُو	تَدْعُو	تَدْعُ		دُعِيتْ	تُدْعَى
هُمَا—m	دَعَا	يَدْعَوَانِ	يَدْعُوا	يَدْعُوا		دُعِيَا	يُدْعَوَانِ
هُمَا—f	دَعَا	تَدْعَوَانِ	تَدْعُوا	تَدْعُوا		دُعِيَتَا	تُدْعَوَانِ
نَحْنُ	دَعَوْنَا	نَدْعُو	نَدْعُو	نَدْعُ		دُعِينَا	نُدْعَى
أَنْتُمْ	دَعَوْتُمْ	تَدْعُونُ	تَدْعُوا	تَدْعُوا	ادْعُوا	دُعِيتُمْ	تُدْعَوْنَ
أَنْتُنَّ	دَعَوْتُنَّ	تَدْعُونِ	تَدْعُونِ	تَدْعُونِ	ادْعُونِ	دُعِيتُنَّ	تُدْعَوْنَ
هُمْ	دَعَا	يَدْعُونُ	يَدْعُوا	يَدْعُوا		دُعُوا	يُدْعَوْنَ
هُنَّ	دَعَوْنَ	يَدْعُونِ	يَدْعُونِ	يَدْعُونِ		دُعِينَ	يُدْعَوْنَ

Form I Defective root (-aa/-ii): بَنَى ، يَبْنِي AP: بَانَ PP: مَبْنًى VN: بِنَاء 'to build'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	بَنَيْتُ	أَبْنِي	أَبْنِي	أَبْنِ		بُنِيتُ	أُبْنَى
أَنْتَ	بَنَيْتَ	تَبْنِي	تَبْنِي	تَبْنِ	ابْنِ	بُنِيتَ	تُبْنَى
أَنْتِ	بَنَيْتِ	تَبْنِينَ	تَبْنِي	تَبْنِي	ابْنِي	بُنِيتِ	تُبْنِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	بَنَيْتُمَا	تَبْنِيَانِ	تَبْنِيَا	تَبْنِيَا	ابْنِيَا	بُنِيتُمَا	تُبْنِيَانِ
هُوَ	بَنَى	يَبْنِي	يَبْنِي	يَبْنِ		بُنِيَ	يُبْنَى
هِيَ	بَنَتْ	تَبْنِي	تَبْنِي	تَبْنِ		بُنِيتْ	تُبْنَى
هُمَا-m	بَنَيَا	يَبْنِيَانِ	يَبْنِيَا	يَبْنِيَا		بُنِيَا	يُبْنِيَانِ
هُمَا-f	بَنَتَا	تَبْنِيَانِ	تَبْنِيَا	تَبْنِيَا		بُنِيَا	تُبْنِيَانِ
نَحْنُ	بَنَيْنَا	نَبْنِي	نَبْنِي	نَبْنِ		بُنِينَا	نُبْنَى
أَنْتُمْ	بَنَيْتُمْ	تَبْنُونَ	تَبْنُوا	تَبْنُوا	ابْنُوا	بُنِيتُمْ	تُبْنُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	بَنَيْتُنَّ	تَبْنِينَ	تَبْنِينَ	تَبْنِينَ	ابْنِينَ	بُنِيتُنَّ	تُبْنِينَ
هُمْ	بَنَوْا	يَبْنُونَ	يَبْنُوا	يَبْنُوا		بُنُوا	يُبْنُونَ
هُنَّ	بَنِينَ	يَبْنِينَ	يَبْنِينَ	يَبْنِينَ		بُنِينَ	يُبْنِينَ

Form I Defective (-iy/-aa): نَسِيَ، يَنْسِي AP: نَاسٍ PP: مَنَسِيَ VN: نَسِيَانٌ 'to forget'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	نَسَيْتُ	أَنْسِي	أَنْسِي	أَنْسَ		نُسِيتُ	أُنْسَى
أَنْتَ	نَسَيْتَ	تَنْسِي	تَنْسِي	تَنْسَ	اَنْسَ	نُسِيتَ	تُنْسَى
أَنْتِ	نَسَيْتِ	تَنْسِينَ	تَنْسِيْ	تَنْسِيْ	اَنْسِيْ	نُسِيتِ	تُنْسِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	نَسَيْتُمَا	تَنْسِيَانِ	تَنْسِيَا	تَنْسِيَا	اَنْسِيَا	نُسِيتُمَا	تُنْسِيَانِ
هُوَ	نَسِيَ	يَنْسِي	يَنْسِي	يَنْسَ		نُسِيَ	يُنْسَى
هِيَ	نَسَيْتْ	تَنْسِي	تَنْسِي	تَنْسَ		نُسِيتْ	تُنْسَى
هُمَا-m	نَسِيَا	يَنْسِيَانِ	يَنْسِيَا	يَنْسِيَا		نُسِيَا	يُنْسِيَانِ
هُمَا-f	نَسِيَتَا	تَنْسِيَانِ	تَنْسِيَا	تَنْسِيَا		نُسِيَتَا	تُنْسِيَانِ
نَحْنُ	نَسِينَا	نَنْسِي	نَنْسِي	نَنْسَ		نُسِينَا	نُنْسَى
أَنْتُمْ	نَسَيْتُمْ	تَنْسَوْنَ	تَنْسُوا	تَنْسُوا	اَنْسُوا	نُسَيْتُمْ	تُنْسَوْنَ
أَنْتُنَّ	نَسَيْتُنَّ	تَنْسِينَ	تَنْسِينَ	تَنْسِينَ	اَنْسِينَ	نُسَيْتُنَّ	تُنْسِينَ
هُمْ	نَسُوا	يَنْسَوْنَ	يَنْسُوا	يَنْسُوا		نُسُوا	يُنْسَوْنَ
هُنَّ	نَسِينَ	يَنْسِينَ	يَنْسِينَ	يَنْسِينَ		نُسِينَ	يُنْسَوْنَ

Form I Hollow and hamzated root: جاءَ ، يَجِيءُ AP: جاءَ PP: مَجِيءٌ VN: مَجِيءٌ 'to come'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	جِئْتُ	أَجِيءُ	أَجِيءَ	أَجِئْ		جِئْتُ	أُجاءُ
أنتَ	جِئْتَ	تَجِيءُ	تَجِيءَ	تَجِئْ	تعالَ	جِئْتَ	تُجاءُ
أنتِ	جِئْتِ	تَجِيئينَ	تَجِيئي	تَجِيئي	تعالِيْ	جِئْتِ	تُجائينَ
أنتما-m/f	جِئْتُمَا	تَجِيئَانِ	تَجِيئَا	تَجِيئَا	تعالِيَا	جِئْتُمَا	تُجاءَانِ
هو	جاءَ	يَجِيءُ	يَجِيءَ	يَجِئْ		جِئَ	يُجاءُ
هي	جاءَتْ	تَجِيءُ	تَجِيءَ	تَجِئْ		جِئَتْ	تُجاءُ
هما-m	جاءَا	يَجِيئَانِ	يَجِيئَا	يَجِيئَا		جِئَا	يُجاءَانِ
هما-f	جاءَتَا	تَجِيئَانِ	تَجِيئَا	تَجِيئَا		جِئْتَا	تُجاءَانِ
نحنُ	جِئْنَا	نَجِيءُ	نَجِيءَ	نَجِئْ		جِئْنَا	نُجاءُ
أنتمُ	جِئْتُمْ	تَجِيئونَ	تَجِيئُوا	تَجِيئُوا	تعالُوا	جِئْتُمْ	تُجاءُونُ
أنتنَّ	جِئْتُنَّ	تَجِيئنَ	تَجِيئنَ	تَجِيئنَ	تعالَيْنَ	جِئْتُنَّ	تُجاءُنَ
همُ	جاءُوا	يَجِيئونَ	يَجِيئُوا	يَجِيئُوا		جِئُوا	يُجاءُونُ
هنَّ	جِئْنَ	يَجِيئنَ	يَجِيئنَ	يَجِيئنَ		جِئْنَ	يُجاءُنَ

This verb has a replacive form for the imperative.

Form I Doubly weak root: رَأَى ، يَرَى AP: رَأَى PP: مَرَّئِي VN: رَأَى 'to see'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	رَأَيْتُ	أَرَى	أَرَى	أَر		رُئِيتُ	أُرَى
أَنْتَ	رَأَيْتَ	تَرَى	تَرَى	تَر	ر	رُئِيتَ	تُرَى
أَنْتِ	رَأَيْتِ	تَرِينَ	تَرِيْ	تَرِيْ	رِيْ	رُئِيتِ	تُرِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	رَأَيْتُمَا	تَرِيَان	تَرِيَا	تَرِيَا	رِيَا	رُئِيتُمَا	تُرِيَان
هُوَ	رَأَى	يَرَى	يَرَى	يَر		رُئِيَ	يُرَى
هِيَ	رَأَتْ	تَرَى	تَرَى	تَر		رُئِيتْ	تُرَى
هُمَا-m	رَأَيَا	يَرِيَان	يَرِيَا	يَرِيَا		رُئِيَا	يُرِيَان
هُمَا-f	رَأَتَا	تَرِيَان	تَرِيَا	تَرِيَا		رُئِيَتَا	تُرِيَان
نَحْنُ	رَأَيْنَا	نَرَى	نَرَى	نَر		رُئِينَا	نُرَى
أَنْتُمْ	رَأَيْتُمْ	تَرُونَ	تَرُواْ	تَرُواْ	رُواْ	رُئِيتُمْ	تُرُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	رَأَيْتُنَّ	تَرِينَ	تَرِينَ	تَرِينَ		رُئِيتُنَّ	تُرِينَ
هُمْ	رَأَوْاْ	يَرُونَ	يَرُواْ	يَرُواْ		رُؤُواْ	يُرُونَ
هُنَّ	رَأَيْنَ	يَرِينَ	يَرِينَ	يَرِينَ	رِينَ	رُئِينَ	يَرِينَ

Form I Doubly weak: *وَعَى* ، *يَعِي* AP: *واع* PP: *موَّعيّ* VN: *وَعِي* 'to perceive'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	وَعَيْتُ	أَعِي	أَعِي	أَع		وُعِيتُ	أُوْعَى
أَنْتَ	وَعَيْتَ	تَعِي	تَعِي	تَع	ع	وُعِيتَ	تُوْعَى
أَنْتِ	وَعَيْتِ	تَعِينِ	تَعِي	تَعِي	عِي	وُعِيتِ	تُوْعَيْنِ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	وَعَيْتُمَا	تَعِيَانِ	تَعِيَا	تَعِيَا	عِيَا	وُعِيتُمَا	تُوْعِيَانِ
هُوَ	وَعَى	يَعِيَانِ	يَعِي	يَع		وُعِيَ	يُوْعَى
هِيَ	وَعَتْ	تَعِي	تَعِي	تَع		وُعِيتْ	تُوْعَى
هُمَا-m	وَعَا	يَعِيَانِ	يَعِيَا	يَعِيَا		وُعِيَا	يُوْعِيَانِ
هُمَا-f	وَعَا	تَعِيَانِ	تَعِيَا	تَعِيَا		وُعِيَتَا	تُوْعِيَانِ
نَحْنُ	وَعَيْنَا	نَعِي	نَعِي	نَع		وُعِينَا	نُوْعَى
أَنْتُمْ	وَعَيْتُمْ	تَعُونُ	تَعُوا	تَعُوا	عُوا	وُعِيتُمْ	تُوْعُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	وَعَيْتُنَّ	تَعِينُ	تَعِينَ	تَعِينَ	عِينَ	وُعِيتُنَّ	تُوْعَيْنُ
هُمْ	وَعَوْا	يَعُونُ	يَعُوا	يَعُوا		وُعُوا	يُوْعُونَ
هُنَّ	وَعَيْنَ	يَعِينُ	يَعِينَ	يَعِينَ		وُعِينَ	يُوْعَيْنُ

Form I Hollow, defective root: نَوَى ، يَنْوِي AP: نَاوٍ PP: مَنَوِيٌّ VN: نِيَّةٌ 'to intend'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	نَوَيْتُ	أَنْوِي	أَنْوِيَ	أَنْوِ		نُوتِ	أُنْوَى
أَنْتَ	نَوَيْتَ	تَنْوِي	تَنْوِيَ	تَنْوِ	نِ	نُوتِ	تُنْوَى
أَنْتِ	نَوَيْتِ	تَنْوِينِ	تَنْوِي	تَنْوِي	نِي	نُوتِ	تَنْوِينِ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	نَوَيْتُمَا	تَنْوِيَانِ	تَنْوِيَا	تَنْوِيَا	نِيَا	نُوتِيَا	تَنْوِيَانِ
هُوَ	نَوَى	يَنْوِي	يَنْوِيَ	يَنْوِ		نُويَ	يُنْوَى
هِيَ	نَوَتْ	تَنْوِي	تَنْوِيَ	تَنْوِ		نُوتِ	تُنْوَى
هُمَا-m	نَوَيَا	يَنْوِيَانِ	يَنْوِيَا	يَنْوِيَا		نُويَا	يُنْوِيَانِ
هُمَا-f	نَوَتَا	تَنْوِيَانِ	تَنْوِيَا	تَنْوِيَا		نُوتِيَا	تَنْوِيَانِ
نَحْنُ	نَوَيْنَا	نَنْوِي	نَنْوِيَ	نَنْوِ		نُويْنَا	نُنْوَى
أَنْتُمْ	نَوَيْتُمْ	تَنْوُونِ	تَنْوُوا	تَنْوُوا	نُوا	نُوتِمْ	تَنْوُونِ
أَنْتُنَّ	نَوَيْتُنَّ	تَنْوِينِ	تَنْوِينَ	تَنْوِينَ	نِينَ	نُوتِينَ	تَنْوِينِ
هُمْ	نَوَوْا	يَنْوُونِ	يَنْوُوا	يَنْوُوا		نُوُوا	يُنْوُونِ
هُنَّ	نَوَيْنَ	يَنْوِينِ	يَنْوِينَ	يَنْوِينَ		نُوينَ	يُنْوِينِ

Form II

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *fa^cal-a* فَعَّلَ / *yu-fa^cil-u* يُفَعِّلُ

Form II verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that the medial consonant is doubled. They have the stem patterns $C_1aC_2C_2aC_3$ - in the past tense and $yu-C_1aC_2C_2iC_3$ - in the present. The medial root consonant retains its doubled status throughout the past and present tense conjugations.

1.2 Meaning

Form II verbs are often causative of transitive Form I verbs, or, if Form I is intransitive, Form II may have transitive meaning. Another shade of meaning that is said to be conveyed by Form II is intensive or repeated action (*kassar-a* ‘to smash, to shatter’). Form II may also be denominative, used to form verbs out of nouns (e.g., *Sawwar-a* ‘to photograph’ from *Suura*, ‘picture’).¹

1.3 Transitivity

Form II is normally transitive but may sometimes be intransitive.² It may also be doubly transitive, taking two direct objects (e.g., *darras-a* ‘to teach (s.o. s.th.)’).

1.4 Inflection

A particular inflectional characteristic of Form II verbs is that the present tense subject-marker vowel is *Damma* and the present tense stem vowel is *kasra* (*yu-darris-u*).

¹ In Arabic, the verb is usually considered the most elemental form of a lexical entry, but in a few instances, the verb is derived from a noun. These “denominal” verbs tend to exist in Forms II and V and rarely in other forms. They can be trilateral or quadrilateral. Denominal verbs rarely have a Form I. Some examples of Form II denominal verbs include:

to unite	<i>waHHad-a/yu-waHHid-u</i> وَحَدَّ / يُوحِدُ (from ‘one’ <i>waaHid</i> واحد)
to head	<i>ra^ʔas-a/yu-ra^ʔis-u</i> رَأَسَ / يَرَأِسُ (from ‘head’ <i>ra^s</i> رأس)
to name	<i>sammaa/yu-sammii</i> سَمَّى / يَسْمِي (from ‘name’ <i>ism</i> اسم)

² Kouloughli 1994, 201 states that Form II is transitive 95 percent of the time. Likewise he states that Form II is “l’une des plus vivaces de l’arabe moderne” (ibid.).

Paradigm charts for Form II verbs of various root types are located at the end of this chapter.

2 Regular (sound) trilateral root

These are examples of verbs that have sound trilateral roots:

to prefer	faDDal-a/yu-faDDil-u	فَضَّلَ / يُفَضِّلُ
to arrange	rattab-a/yu-rattib-u	رَتَّبَ / يُرَتِّبُ
to clean	naZZaf-a/yu-naZZif-u	نَظَّفَ / يُنَظِّفُ
to appreciate	qaddar-a/yu-qaddir-u	قَدَّرَ / يُقَدِّرُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form II

Geminate roots in Form II have the following stem patterns: $C_1aC_2C_2aC_2$ - in the past tense and $yuC_1aC_2C_2iC_2$ - in the present. The doubling of the medial consonant changes the geminate root in Form II so that it inflects as a regular Form II, that is, there is no stem shift as there is in Form I geminates. For example:

to cause	sabbab-a/yu-sabbib-u	سَبَّبَ / يُسَبِّبُ
to decide, determine	qarrar-a/ yu-qarrir-u	قَرَّرَ / يُقَرِّرُ
to criticize	naddad-a/yu-naddid-u	نَدَّدَ / يُنَدِّدُ
to analyze	Hallal-a/yu-Hallil-u	حَلَّلَ / يُحَلِّلُ

4 Hamzated roots in Form II

A *hamza* may occur in the first, second, or third position in the trilateral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the *hamza* may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense in Form II.

4.1 Initial *hamza*

Hamza-initial verbs in Form II have *ʾalif* as the *hamza* seat in the past tense, and *waaw* as the *hamza* seat in the present tense. The *hamza* seat is determined by its position in the word, according to the orthographical rules for *hamza* described in Chapter 2, section 3.3. In Form II verbs, initial *hamza* shifts from word-initial position in the past tense stem to word-medial position in the present tense stem and is influenced by the *Damma* of the present tense subject-marking prefix so that its seat shifts from *ʾalif* to *waaw*.

to delay	ʾajjal-a/yu-ʾajjil-u	أَجَّلَ / يُؤَجِّلُ
to establish, found	ʾassas-a/yu-ʾassis-u	أَسَّسَ / يُؤَسِّسُ
to affirm	ʾakkad-a/yu-ʾakkid-u	أَكَّدَ / يُؤَكِّدُ
to affect	ʾaththar-a/yu-ʾaththir-u	أَثَّرَ / يُؤَثِّرُ

4.2 Medial *hamza*

The seat for medial *hamza* shifts from *ʾalif* in the past tense to *yaaʾ* in the present tense (because of the shift of stem vowel from *fatHa* to *kasra*).

to appoint as head	<i>raʾʾas-a/ yu-raʾʾis-u</i>	رَأْسٌ / يَرِئُسُ
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4.3 Final *hamza*

The seat for final *hamza* in Form II, as in other forms, shifts according to the rules for word-final *hamza*; note that certain inflectional suffixes extend the word length, and therefore the seat for *hamza* is affected (e.g., *hannaʾ-uu-haa* هَنُّوْهَا ‘they congratulated her’).

to free	<i>barraʾ-a/ yu-barriʾ-u</i>	بَرَأَ / يَبْرِئُ
to congratulate	<i>hannaʾ-a/ yu-hanniʾ-u</i>	هَنَأَ / يَهْنِئُ
to hide	<i>xabbaʾ-a/ yu-xabbiʾ-u</i>	خَبَأَ / يَخْبِئُ
to heat, warm	<i>daffaʾ-a/ yu-daffiʾ-u</i>	دَفَأَ / يَدْفِئُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form II

Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either *waaw* or *yaaʾ*, are inflected as sound roots in Form II; the *waaw* or *yaaʾ* remains stable in both tenses.

to sign, endorse	<i>waqqaʿ-a/ yu-waqqiʿ-u</i>	وَقَعَ / يُوَقِّعُ
to stop, halt	<i>waqqaf-a/ yu-waqqif-u</i>	وَقَفَ / يُوَقِّفُ

6 Hollow roots in Form II

Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form II, the *waaw* or *yaaʾ* that is the second radical functions as a stable consonant.

to create	<i>kawwan-a/ yu-kawwin-u</i>	كَوَّنَ / يَكْوِنُ
to change	<i>ghayyar-a/ yu-ghayyir-u</i>	غَيَّرَ / يَغْيِرُ
to photograph	<i>Sawwar-a/ yu-Sawwir-u</i>	صَوَّرَ / يَصُورُ
to appoint	<i>ʿayyan-a/ yu-ʿayyin-u</i>	عَيَّنَ / يَعِيْنُ

7 Defective roots in Form II

Defective roots, where the final radical is either *waaw* or *yaaʾ*, behave as *-aa/-ii* verbs in Form II. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently */a/* in the past tense and */i/* in the present tense.

to cover	ghaTTaa yu-ghaTTii	غَطَّى / يَغْطِي
to pray	Sallaa yu-Sallii	صَلَّى / يَصَلِّي
to sing	ghannaa yu-ghannii	غَنَّى / يَغْنِي
to sacrifice	DaHHaa yu-DaHHii	ضَحَّى / يَضْحِي

8 Doubly weak roots in Form II

These roots have two forms of weakness which may occur at any point in the root.

8.1 Hamzated and defective

to carry out; to perform (s.th.)	ʾaddaa yu-ʾaddii	أَدَّى / يُؤَدِّي
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8.2 Hamzated and hollow

to help, aid (s.o. or s.th.)	ʾayyad-a yu-ʾayyid-u	أَيْدٍ / يُؤَيِّدُ
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8.3 Hollow and defective

to greet; keep alive; grant long life	Hayyaa yu-Hayyii	حَيَّ / يُحْيِي
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9 Examples of Form II verbs in context

اللَّهُ يَسْلِمُكَ.

allaah-u yu-sallim-u-ka.

(May) God keep you safe.

يَهْنِئُ الرَّئِيسَ الْجَدِيدَ. <i>yu-hanni-u l-raʾiis-a l-jadiid-a.</i> He congratulates the new president.	نَرْحَبُ بَكُمْ. <i>nu-raHHib-u bi-kum.</i> We welcome you.	ضَحَيْتُمْ كَثِيرًا. <i>DaHHay-tum kathiir-an.</i> You (pl.) have sacrificed much.
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أصدر بياناً نَدَّد فيه باستمرار الاحتلال.

ʾaSdar-a bayaan-an naddad-a fii-hi bi-stimraar-i l-iHtilaal-i.

He issued a statement in which he criticized the continuation of occupation.

10 Form II verbal nouns

Verbal nouns from Form II most often have the form *tafʿiil* تَفْعِيل; occasionally *tafʿiila* تَفْعِيلَة.³ Variations on Form II verbal nouns also include *tafʿaal* تَفْعَال or *tifʿaal* تَفْعَال and *tafʿila* تَفْعِلَة.

³ For an extensive list of Form II verbal noun variants in Classical Arabic see Wright 1967, I:115–16.

10.1 Sound/regular root

arrangement	<i>tartiib</i>	تَرْتِيبَ	statue	<i>timthaal</i>	تَمَثَال
reminder; souvenir	<i>tadhkaar</i>	تَذْكَار	experiment	<i>tajriba</i>	تَجْرِبَة

10.2 Geminate root

repetition	<i>takraar</i>	تَكَرَّار	renewal	<i>tajdiid</i>	تَجْدِيد
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10.3 Hamzated root

founding	<i>ta'siis</i>	تَأْسِيس	visa	<i>ta'shiira</i>	تَأْشِيرَة
congratulating	<i>tahni'a</i>	تَهْنِئَة	heating	<i>tadfi'a</i>	تَدْفِئَة

10.4 Assimilated root

unification	<i>tawHiid</i>	تَوْحِيد	clarification	<i>tawDiiH</i>	تَوْضِيح
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10.5 Hollow root

creation	<i>takwiin</i>	تَكْوِين	appointing	<i>ta'yiin</i>	تَعْيِين
photographing	<i>taSwiir</i>	تَصْوِير	change	<i>taghyiir</i>	تَغْيِير

10.6 Defective root

naming	<i>tasmiya</i>	تَسْمِيَة	covering	<i>taghtiya</i>	تَغْطِيَة
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10.7 Doubly weak

Here are a few examples of doubly weak Form II verbal nouns.

10.7.1 Hamzated and defective

carrying out; performing	<i>ta'diya</i>	تَأْدِيَة
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10.7.2 Hamzated and hollow

assistance	<i>ta'yiid</i>	تَأْيِيد
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10.7.3 Hollow and defective

greeting, salutation	<i>taHiyya</i>	تَحِيَة
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10.8 Borrowing from Form I

Occasionally a Form II verb uses a verbal noun derived from Form I:

singing	<i>ghinaa'</i>	غِنَاء	praying, prayer	<i>Salaat</i>	صَلَاة
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10.9 Examples of Form II verbal nouns in context

تدفئة مركزية

tadfi'at-un markaziyyat-un

central heating

تقرير مصيره

taqriir-u maSiir-i-hi

self-determination ('deciding its future')

تعيين اللواء مديراً للدائرة

ta'yiin-u l-liwaa'i mudiir-an li-l-daa'irat-i

appointing the general as director of the department

التغييرات السياسية

al-taghyiiraat-u l-siyaasiyyat-u

political changes

11 Form II participles

Form II participles occur as nouns and as adjectives. Examples are provided wherever possible.

11.1 Form II active participle (AP): *mufa'ʿil* مُفَاعِلٌ

11.1.1 Sound/regular root

coordinator;
organizer

مُنَسِّقٌ

smuggler

muharrib

مُهِرِبٌ

inspector

mufattish

مُفَتِّشٌ

drug/s

muxaddir/-aat

مُخَدِّرٌ / مُخَدِّرَاتٌ

11.1.2 Geminate root

editor

muHarrir

مُحَرِّرٌ

analyst

muHallil

مُحَلِّلٌ

11.1.3 Hamzated root

muezzin

mu'adhdhin

مُؤَذِّنٌ

congratulating

muhanni'

مُهِنِّئٌ

11.1.4 Assimilated root

connecting

muwaSSil

مُوصِّلٌ

11.1.5 Hollow root

distinctive

mumayyiz

مُمَيِّزٌ

creator;

mukawwin

component

مُكَوِّنٌ

11.1.6 Defective root

The active participle of defective roots is inflected as a defective noun or adjective (declension six) and ends with the defective marker of *kasratayn*:

praying⁴*muSall-in*

مُصَلٍّ

singer/singing

mughann-in

مُغَنٍّ

⁴ Also, 'person in prayer.'

11.1.7 Examples of Form II active participles in context

في عمر مبكر <i>fii 'umr-in mubakkir-in</i> at an early age	منسق نشاطات الأمم المتحدة <i>munassiq-u nashaaTaata-i l-'umam-i</i> <i>l-muttaHidat-i</i> the coordinator of UN activities
مهربو المخدرات <i>muharrib-uu l-mukhaddir-aat</i> drug smugglers (smugglers of drugs)	محلل الشؤون السياسية العسكرية <i>muHallil-u l-shu'uun-i l-siyaasiyyat-i</i> <i>l-'askariyyat-i</i> political-military affairs analyst
منظمة الأقطار العربية المصدرة للنفط <i>munaZZamat-u l-'aqTaari l-'arabiyyat-i l-muSaddirat-i li-l-nafT-i</i> the organization of Arab oil-exporting countries	

11.2 Form II passive participle (PP): *mufa'ʿal* مفعّل

11.2.1 Sound/regular root

volume; tome	<i>mujallad</i>	مجلّد	complicated	<i>mu'aqqad</i>	معقّد
triangle	<i>muthallath</i>	مثلث	cubic; cubed	<i>muka'ab</i>	مكعب
square	<i>murabba'</i>	مربع	armed	<i>musallaH</i>	مسلح

12.2 Assimilated root

employee	<i>muwaZZaf</i>	موظف	successful; lucky	<i>muwaffaq</i>	موفق
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12.3 Geminate root

shattered	<i>mufakkak</i>	مفكك	set, delineated	<i>muHaddad</i>	محدد
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12.4 Hamzated root

nationalized	<i>mu'ammam</i>	مؤمم	foundation	<i>mu'assassa</i>	مؤسسة
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12.5 Hollow root

illustrated	<i>muSawwar</i>	مصور	appointed, designated	<i>mu'ayyan</i>	معين
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12.6 Defective root

The passive participle of defective roots ends with *'alif maqSuura* and is inflected as an indeclinable noun or adjective (declension seven).

educated, raised; preserves, jam	<i>murabban</i>	مربى	covered	<i>mughaTTan</i>	مغطى
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11.2.7 Examples of Form II passive participles in context

معجم مفصّل

mu^ˈjam-un mufaSSal-un

a detailed lexicon

القوّات المسلّحة

al-quwwaat-u l-musallaHat-u

the armed forces

في موعد محدّد

fii maw^ˈid-in muHaddad-in

at a set time

مصالِح مؤمّمة

maSaaliH-u mu^ˈammamat-un

nationalized interests/assets

قاموس مصوّر

qaamuus-un muSawwar-un

an illustrated dictionary

السفير المعيّن

al-safiir-u l-mu^ˈayyan-u

the ambassador-designate

Form II Sound root: ^{ر ت ب} ترتب ، يرتب AP: ^{مرتّب} مرتّب PP: ^{مرتّب} مرتّب VN: ^{ترتيب} ترتيب 'to arrange'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	رَتَبْتُ	أَرْتَبُ	أُرْتَبَ	أُرْتَبْ		رُتِبْتُ	أُرْتَبْ
أَنْتَ	رَتَبْتَ	تَرْتَبُ	تُرْتَبَ	تُرْتَبْ	رَبِّ	رُتِبْتَ	تُرْتَبْ
أَنْتِ	رَتَبْتِ	تَرْتَبِينَ	تُرْتَبِي	تُرْتَبِي	رَبِّي	رُتِبْتِ	تُرْتَبِينَ
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	رَتَبْتُمَا	تَرْتَبَانِ	تُرْتَبَا	تُرْتَبَا	رَبَّا	رُتِبْتُمَا	تُرْتَبَانِ
هُوَ	رَتَبَ	يَرْتَبُ	يُرْتَبَ	يُرْتَبْ		رُتِبَ	يُرْتَبْ
هِيَ	رَتَبَتْ	تَرْتَبُ	تُرْتَبَ	تُرْتَبْ		رُتِبَتْ	تُرْتَبْ
هُمَا—m	رَتَبَا	يَرْتَبَانِ	يُرْتَبَا	يُرْتَبَا		رُتِبَا	يُرْتَبَانِ
هُمَا—f	رَتَبَتَا	تَرْتَبَانِ	تُرْتَبَا	تُرْتَبَا		رُتِبَتَا	تُرْتَبَانِ
نَحْنُ	رَتَبْنَا	نَرْتَبُ	نُرْتَبَ	نُرْتَبْ		رُتِبْنَا	نُرْتَبْ
أَنْتُمْ	رَتَبْتُمْ	تَرْتَبُونَ	تُرْتَبُوا	تُرْتَبُوا	رَتَبُوا	رُتِبْتُمْ	تُرْتَبُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	رَتَبْتُنَّ	تَرْتَبْنَ	تُرْتَبْنَ	تُرْتَبْنَ		رُتِبْتُنَّ	تُرْتَبْنَ
هُمْ	رَتَبُوا	يَرْتَبُونَ	يُرْتَبُوا	يُرْتَبُوا		رُتِبُوا	يُرْتَبُونَ
هُنَّ	رَتَبْنَ	يَرْتَبْنَ	يُرْتَبْنَ	يُرْتَبْنَ	رَتَبْنَ	رُتِبْنَ	يُرْتَبْنَ

Form II Geminate root: ^{ق ر ر}قرر , ^{ي ق ر}يقرر AP: ^{م ق ر ر}مقرر PP: ^{م ق ر ر}مقرر VN: ^{ت ق ر ر}تقرر , قرار 'to decide'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} أقرر	^{ق ر ر} أقرر	^{ي ق ر ر} أقرر		^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} أقرر
أنت	^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرر	^{ق ر ر} تقرر	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرر	^{ق ر ر} قرر	^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرر
أنت	^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} تقررين	^{ق ر ر} تقرري	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرري	^{ق ر ر} قرري	^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} تقررين
أنتما-m/f	^{ق ر ر} قررتما	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرران	^{ق ر ر} تقررأ	^{ي ق ر ر} تقررأ	^{ق ر ر} قررأ	^{ق ر ر} قررتما	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرران
هو	^{ق ر ر} قرر	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرر	^{ق ر ر} يقرر	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرر		^{ق ر ر} قرر	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرر
هي	^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرر	^{ق ر ر} تقرر	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرر		^{ق ر ر} قررت	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرر
هما-m	^{ق ر ر} قررأ	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرران	^{ق ر ر} يقررأ	^{ي ق ر ر} يقررأ		^{ق ر ر} قررأ	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرران
هما-f	^{ق ر ر} قررتأ	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرران	^{ق ر ر} تقررأ	^{ي ق ر ر} تقررأ		^{ق ر ر} قررتأ	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرران
نحن	^{ق ر ر} قررنا	^{ي ق ر ر} نقرر	^{ق ر ر} نقرر	^{ي ق ر ر} نقرر		^{ق ر ر} قررنا	^{ي ق ر ر} نقرر
أنتم	^{ق ر ر} قررتم	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرررون	^{ق ر ر} تقررروأ	^{ي ق ر ر} تقررروأ	^{ق ر ر} قررروأ	^{ق ر ر} قررتم	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرررون
أنتن	^{ق ر ر} قررتن	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرررن	^{ق ر ر} تقرررن	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرررن	^{ق ر ر} قرررن	^{ق ر ر} قررتن	^{ي ق ر ر} تقرررن
هم	^{ق ر ر} قررروأ	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرررون	^{ق ر ر} يقررروأ	^{ي ق ر ر} يقررروأ		^{ق ر ر} قررروأ	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرررون
هن	^{ق ر ر} قررن	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرررن	^{ق ر ر} يقرررن	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرررن		^{ق ر ر} قررن	^{ي ق ر ر} يقرررن

Form II *hamza-initial root*: يُؤَجِّلُ ، أَجَّلَ ، AP: مُؤَجِّلٌ PP: مُؤَجَّلٌ VN: تَأْجِيلٌ 'to delay'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَجَلْتُ	أُؤَجِّلُ	أُؤَجِّلَ	أُؤَجِّلْ		أُجِّلْتُ	أُؤَجِّلُ
أَنْتَ	أَجَلْتَ	تُؤَجِّلُ	تُؤَجِّلَ	تُؤَجِّلْ	أَجِّلْ	أُجِّلْتَ	تُؤَجِّلُ
أَنْتِ	أَجَلْتِ	تُؤَجِّلِينَ	تُؤَجِّلِي	تُؤَجِّلِي	أَجِّلِي	أُجِّلْتِ	تُؤَجِّلِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	أَجَلْتُمَا	تُؤَجِّلَانِ	تُؤَجِّلَا	تُؤَجِّلَا	أَجِّلَا	أُجِّلْتُمَا	تُؤَجِّلَانِ
هُوَ	أَجَلَ	يُؤَجِّلُ	يُؤَجِّلَ	يُؤَجِّلْ		أُجِّلَ	يُؤَجِّلُ
هِيَ	أَجَلَتْ	تُؤَجِّلُ	تُؤَجِّلَ	تُؤَجِّلْ		أُجِّلَتْ	تُؤَجِّلُ
هُمَا-m	أَجَلَا	يُؤَجِّلَانِ	يُؤَجِّلَا	يُؤَجِّلَا		أُجِّلَا	يُؤَجِّلَانِ
هُمَا-f	أَجَلْتَا	تُؤَجِّلَانِ	تُؤَجِّلَا	تُؤَجِّلَا		أُجِّلْتَا	تُؤَجِّلَانِ
نَحْنُ	أَجَلْنَا	نُؤَجِّلُ	نُؤَجِّلَ	نُؤَجِّلْ		أُجِّلْنَا	نُؤَجِّلُ
أَنْتُمْ	أَجَلْتُمْ	تُؤَجِّلُونَ	تُؤَجِّلُوا	تُؤَجِّلُوا	أَجِّلُوا	أُجِّلْتُمْ	تُؤَجِّلُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	أَجَلْتُنَّ	تُؤَجِّلْنَ	تُؤَجِّلْنَ	تُؤَجِّلْنَ	أَجِّلْنَ	أُجِّلْتُنَّ	تُؤَجِّلْنَ
هُمْ	أَجَلُوا	يُؤَجِّلُونَ	يُؤَجِّلُوا	يُؤَجِّلُوا		أُجِّلُوا	يُؤَجِّلُونَ
هُنَّ	أَجَلْنَ	يُؤَجِّلْنَ	يُؤَجِّلْنَ	يُؤَجِّلْنَ		أُجِّلْنَ	يُؤَجِّلْنَ

Form II hamza-final root: هـ نـ يـ AP: مهنئ PP: مهنأ VN: تهنت 'to congratulate'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	هَنَأْتُ	أُهْنِئُ	أُهْنِئِ	أُهْنِئْ		هَنْتُ	أُهْنِئْ
أنت	هَنَأْتَ	تُهْنِئُ	تُهْنِئِ	تُهْنِئْ	هْنِئْ	هَنْتَ	تُهْنِئْ
أنت	هَنَأْتِ	تُهْنِئِينَ	تُهْنِئِي	تُهْنِئِي	هَنْئِي	هَنْتِ	تُهْنِئِينَ
أنتما-m/f	هَنَأْتُمَا	تُهْنِئَانِ	تُهْنِئَا	تُهْنِئَا	هَنْئَا	هَنْتُمَا	تُهْنِئَانِ
هو	هَنَأَ	يُهْنِئُ	يُهْنِئِ	يُهْنِئْ		هْنِئَ	يُهْنِئْ
هي	هَنَأَتْ	تُهْنِئُ	تُهْنِئِ	تُهْنِئْ		هَنْتَ	تُهْنِئْ
هما-m	هَنَأَا	يُهْنِئَانِ	يُهْنِئَا	يُهْنِئَا		هَنْتَا	يُهْنِئَانِ
هما-f	هَنَأَتَا	تُهْنِئَانِ	تُهْنِئَا	تُهْنِئَا		هَنْتَا	تُهْنِئَانِ
نحن	هَنَأْنَا	نُهْنِئُ	نُهْنِئِ	نُهْنِئْ		هَنْنَا	نُهْنِئْ
أنتم	هَنَأْتُمْ	تُهْنِئُونَ	تُهْنِئُوا	تُهْنِئُوا	هَنْئُوا	هَنْتُمْ	تُهْنِئُونَ
أنتن	هَنَأْتُنَّ	تُهْنِئْنَ	تُهْنِئْنَ	تُهْنِئْنَ	هَنْئْنَ	هَنْتُنَّ	تُهْنِئْنَ
هم	هَنْوُوا	يُهْنِئُونَ	يُهْنِئُوا	يُهْنِئُوا		هَنْوُوا	يُهْنِئُونَ
هن	هَنْنَا	يُهْنِئْنَ	يُهْنِئْنَ	يُهْنِئْنَ		هَنْنَا	يُهْنِئْنَ

Form II Defective root: ^{ط غ ي} يَغْطِي AP: ^{ط غ ي} مَغَط PP: ^{ط غ ي} مَغْطَى VN: ^{ط غ ي} تَغْطِيَة 'to cover'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	غَطَيْتُ	أُغَطِّي	أُغَطِّي	أُغَطِّ		غُطِيتُ	يُغَطِّي
أَنْتَ	غَطَيْتَ	تَغْطِي	تَغْطِي	تَغَطِّ	غَطِّ	غُطِيتَ	يُغَطِّي
أَنْتِ	غَطَيْتِ	تَغْطِينَ	تَغْطِي	تَغْطِي	غَطِي	غُطِيتِ	يُغَطِّيْنَ
أَنْتُمْ-أَنْتُمْ	غَطَيْتُمْ	تَغْطِيَانِ	تَغْطِيَا	تَغْطِيَا	غَطِيَا	غُطِيتُمْ	يُغَطِّيَانِ
هُوَ	غَطَّى	يَغْطِي	يَغْطِي	يَغَطِّ		غُطِيَ	يُغَطِّي
هِيَ	غَطَتْ	تَغْطِي	تَغْطِي	تَغَطِّ		غُطِيتْ	يُغَطِّي
هُمَا-m	غَطَّيَا	يَغْطِيَانِ	يَغْطِيَا	يَغْطِيَا		غُطِّيَا	يُغَطِّيَانِ
هُمَا-f	غَطَّتَا	تَغْطِيَانِ	تَغْطِيَا	تَغْطِيَا		غُطِّيَا	يُغَطِّيَانِ
نَحْنُ	غَطَّيْنَا	نَغْطِي	نَغْطِي	نَغَطِّ		غُطِّينَا	يُغَطِّي
أَنْتُمْ	غَطَّيْتُمْ	تَغْطُونِ	تَغْطُوا	تَغْطُوا	غَطُّوا	غُطِّيتُمْ	يُغَطُّونِ
أَنْتُنَّ	غَطَّيْتُنَّ	تَغْطِينَ	تَغْطِينَ	تَغْطِينَ	غَطِّينَ	غُطِّيتُنَّ	يُغَطِّيْنَ
هُمْ	غَطَّوْا	يَغْطُونِ	يَغْطُوا	يَغْطُوا		غُطُّوا	يُغَطُّونِ
هِنَّ	غَطَّيْنَهُنَّ	يَغْطِينَ	يَغْطِينَ	يَغْطِينَ		غُطِّينَهُنَّ	يُغَطِّيْنَ

Form III triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *faa^cal-a* فاعَلَ / *yu-faa^cil-u* يُفَاعِلُ

Form III is augmented from Form I by insertion of the long vowel /aa/ after the first radical of the root. It has the basic stem patterns C₁aaC₂aC₃- in the past tense and -C₁aaC₂iC₃- in the present tense, maintaining the long vowel in both tenses.

1.2 Meaning

In terms of meaning, Form III often has the meaning of involving another person in the action. For this reason it is termed “associative.” Related semantic modifications conveyed by this inflectional class include reciprocal action, repeated action, and attempted action.¹

1.3 Transitivity

Form III verbs are usually transitive, but may occasionally be intransitive.

1.4 Inflection

A distinctive inflectional characteristic of Form III verbs is that the present tense subject-marker vowel is *Damma* and the present tense stem vowel is *kasra* (*yu-saa^cid-u*).

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root

These verbs are examples of Form III sound triliteral roots:

to experience	<i>maaras-a/yu-maaris-u</i>	مارَسَ / يُمارِسُ
to defend	<i>daafa^c-a/yu-daafi^c-u</i>	دافعَ / يدافعُ
to assist, help	<i>saa^cad-a/yu-saa^cid-u</i>	ساعدَ / يساعدُ
to observe	<i>raaqab-a/yu-raaqib-u</i>	راقبَ / يراقبُ

¹ For an extensive analysis of Form III and its semantic implications, see Fleisch 1979, II:288–301.

2.1 Associative meaning

Arabic Form III associative verbal concepts are often directly transitive whereas English would need to use the word “with” to indicate reciprocity or associativeness:

to correspond with (s.o.)	<i>raasal-a/ya-raasil-u</i>	رَاسَلَ / يُرَاسِلُ
to share with (s.o.)	<i>shaarak-a/ya-shaarik-u</i>	شَارَكَ / يُشَارِكُ
to deal with (s.o., s.th.)	<i>‘aalaj-a/ya-‘aalij-u</i>	عَالَجَ / يُعَالِجُ
to compete with (s.o.)	<i>saabaq-a/ya-saabiq-u</i>	سَابَقَ / يُسَابِقُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form III

It is rare to find geminate roots in Form III. The ones that do exist have two variant patterns: one where the identical consonants are written together with a *shadda* and one where they are written separately, with an intervening *fatHa*. The following stem patterns occur: $C_1aaC_2C_2a$ (*faa^c-*) and $C_1aaC_2aC_2a$ (*faa^ca^c-*) in the past tense, and $yu-C_1aaC_2C_2$ - (*yu-faa^c-* or *yu-C_1aaC_2iC_2* - (*yu-faa^ci^c-*) in the present.²

to punish	<i>qaaSaS-a/ya-qaaSiS-u</i>	قَاصَصَ / يُقَاصِصُ
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4 Hamzated roots in Form III

The *hamza* may occur in the first, second, or third position in the trilateral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the *hamza* may have to change its seat when the verb inflects for person and tense.

4.1 Initial *hamza*

In Form III, initial *hamza* merges with the long vowel -*aa* of the first syllable in the past tense and it is written as one *‘alif* with *madda*. In the present tense, initial *hamza* sits on a *waaw* seat because it is preceded by the *Damma* of the person-marking prefix:

to censure, to blame	<i>‘aaxadh-a/ya-‘aaxidh-u</i>	أَخَذَ / يُؤَاخِذُ
to consult	<i>‘aamar-a/ya-‘aamir-u</i>	أَمَرَ / يُؤَامِرُ

4.2 Medial *hamza*

The medial *hamza* sits aloof in the past tense of Form III.³ In the present tense it sits on a *yaa^o* seat because it is followed by a *kasra*.

² See Wright 1967, I:71 for further discussion of this variation.

³ This is because it is situated after a long vowel /*aa*/ and before a short vowel /*a*/. It would have an *‘alif* seat, but the general rule is that two *‘alifs* cannot follow each other in Arabic script, so the *hamza* here floats aloof.

to match; to be suitable for	<i>laa'am-a/yu-laa'im-u</i>	لَا مَ / يَلَامُ
to question, interrogate	<i>saa'al-a/yu-saa'il-u</i>	سَاءَلَ / يُسَائِلُ

4.3 Final *hamza*

Final *hamza* sits on an 'alif seat in the past tense and on a *yaa'* seat in the present tense, but because it is the final consonant in the stem, the seat of the *hamza* may shift with inflectional suffixes.

to surprise	<i>faaja'a-yu-faaji'-u</i>	فَاجَأَ / يُفَاجِئُ
to reward; to be commensurate with	<i>kaafa'a-yu-kaafi'-u</i>	كَافَأَ / يُكَافِئُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form III

Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either *waaw* or *yaa'*, are inflected as sound roots in Form III; the *waaw* or *yaa'* is stable.

to agree with	<i>waafaq-a/yu-waafiq-u</i>	وَافَقَ / يُوَافِقُ
to face, confront	<i>waajah-a/yu-waajih-u</i>	وَاجَهَ / يُوَاجِهُ

6 Hollow roots in Form III

Hollow roots behave as strong roots in Form III, the *waaw* or *yaa'* that is the second radical functions as a consonant.

to answer	<i>jaawab-a/yu-jaawib-u</i>	جَاوَبَ / يُجَاوِبُ
to try, attempt	<i>Haawal-a/yu-Haawil-u</i>	حَاوَلَ / يُحَاوِلُ
to consult with	<i>shaawar-a/yu-shaawir-u</i>	شَاوَرَ / يُشَاوِرُ
to be gentle with	<i>laayan-a/yu-laayin-u</i>	لَايَنَ / يُلَايِنُ

7 Defective roots in Form III

Defective roots, where the final radical is either *waaw* or *yaa'*, behave as *-aa/-ii* verbs in Form III. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently */a/* in the past tense and */i/* in the present tense.

to call; summon; invite	<i>naadaa/yu-naadii</i>	نَادَى / يُنَادِي
to compete (with)	<i>baaraa/yu-baarii</i>	بَارَى / يُبَارِي
to endure, to suffer (s.th.)	<i>'aanaa/yu-'aanii</i>	عَانَى / يُعَانِي

8 Doubly weak roots in Form III

Hollow and defective:

to be equivalent to; *saawaa/yu-saawii* ساوى / يساوي
to equalize

9 Examples of Form III verbs in context

تُحاضر في جامعات مختلفة. سيسافر غداً.
tu-HaaDir-u fii jaami'aat-in muxtalifat-in. *sa-yu-saafir-u ghad-an.*
She lectures at different universities. He will travel tomorrow.

في كتبه يعالج الأوضاع السياسية في الشرق الأوسط.
fii kutub-i-hi yu-'aalij-u l-'awDaa'a l-siyaasiyyat-a fii l-sharq-i l-'awsaT-i.
In his books he deals with political conditions in the Middle East.

سيقاصصونه يعاني من التمزق.
sa-yu-qaaSiS-uuna-hu. *yu-'aanii min-a l-tamazzuq-i.*
They will punish him. It suffers from fragmentation.

10 Form III verbal noun

The verbal noun of Form III verbs takes two basic forms: *mufaa'ala* and *fi'aal*. Usually, one of these verbal nouns is used for a particular Form III verb, but occasionally, a verb may use both of these Form III verbal nouns, with either equivalent or slightly different meanings. For example:

Form: Form III *Haawar-a* 'talk, debate, argue'

argument, dispute	<i>muHaawara</i>	مُحَاوَرَة	conversation, dialogue	<i>Hiwaar</i>	حِوَار
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Form: Form III *kaafaH-a* 'to combat, fight, struggle'

confrontation, battle	<i>mukaafaHa</i>	مُكَافَحَة	fight, battle, strife	<i>kifaaH</i>	كِفَاح
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For the most part, however, one of these two verbal nouns suffices for a Form III verb. Both of these verbal noun patterns take the sound feminine plural.

10.1 Sound/regular root

mufaa'ala مُفَاعَلَة

lecture	<i>muHaaDara</i>	مُحَاضَرَة	debate	<i>munaaqasha</i>	مُنَاقَشَة
boycott	<i>muqaaTa'a</i>	مُقَاطَعَة	initiative	<i>mubaadara</i>	مُبَادَرَة
review	<i>muraaja'a</i>	مُرَاجَعَة	conversation	<i>mukaalama</i>	مُكَالَمَة

fi'aal فَعَالٍ

struggle	niDaal	نِضَال	struggle	jihaad	جِهَاد
combat	kifaaH	كِفَاح	defense	difaa°	دِفَاع

10.2 Hamzated root**10.2.1 Hamza initial**

The hamza sits on a waaw seat.

censure, blame	mu'aaxadha	مُؤَاخَذَة	consultation; plotting	mu'aamara	مُؤَامَرَة
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10.2.2 Hamza medial

In these verbal nouns, the hamza "floats" aloof by itself and has no chair.

suitability; appropriateness	mulaa°ama	مُلَاءَمَة
questioning, interrogation	musaa°ala	مُسَاءَلَة

10.2.3 Hamza final

In these verbal nouns, hamza sits on °alif.

surprise	mufaaja°a	مُفَاجَأَة	reward	mukaafa°a	مُكَافَأَة
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10.3 Assimilated root

The assimilated root behaves as a sound root in the Form III verbal noun.

agreement	muwaafaqa	مُؤَافَقَة	balance	muwaazana	مُؤَاوَزَة
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10.4 Hollow root

The hollow root behaves as a sound root in the Form III verbal noun.

attempt	muHaawala	مُحَاوَلَة	vicinity	jiwaar	جَوَار
negotiation	mufaawaDa	مُفَاوَضَة	dialogue; conversation	Hiwaar	حِوَار

10.5 Defective root

In verbal nouns of defective Form III verbs, the second radical is followed by an °alif and taa° marbuuTa.

legal defense	muHaamaat	مُحَامَاَة	suffering, enduring	mu°aanaat	مُعَانَاَة
equality	musaawaat	مُسَاوَاَة	competition, match	mubaaraat	مُبَارَاَة

10.6 Examples of Form III verbal nouns in context

مكالمة تليفونية

mukaalamat-un tiliifuuniyyat-un
a telephone conversation

بمناسبة إعادة تعيين الشيخ

bi-munaasabat-i ʔiʕaadat-i taʕyiin-i l-shaykh-i
on the occasion of the re-appointment of
the sheikh

وزارة الدفاع

wizaarat-u l-difaaʕ-i
ministry of defense

بعد محاولات عدة فاشلة

baʕd-a muHaawalaat-in ʕiddat-in faashilat-in
after several failed attempts

محافظة صنعاء

muHaafaZat-u Sanʕaaʔ-a
the province of Sanaa

سباق الخيل

sibaaq-u l-xayl-i
horse racing

لا مؤاخذه!

laa muʔaaxadhat-a!
No offense [intended]!

صراع الحضارات

Siraaʕ-u l-HaDaaraat-i
culture wars
(‘the struggle of cultures’)

11 Form III participles

Form III participles occur as nouns and as adjectives. In some cases they occur in both functions.

11.1 Form III active participle (AP): *mufaaʕil* مُفاعِل

11.1.1 Sound/regular root

lecturer	<i>muHaaDir</i>	مُحاضِر	similar	<i>mumaathil</i>	مُمَاثِل
assistant	<i>musaaʕid</i>	مُسَاعِد	contemporary	<i>muʕaaSir</i>	مُعَاَصِر
farmer	<i>muzaariʕ</i>	مُزَارِع	adjacent	<i>mutaaxim</i>	مُتَاخِم
observer	<i>muraaqib</i>	مُرَاقِب	appropriate	<i>munaasib</i>	مُنَاسِب

11.1.2 Hamzated root

The final root *hamza* sits on a *yaaʔ* because it is preceded by *kasra*.

surprising *mufaaʕjiʔ* مُفَاجِئٌ

11.1.3 Assimilated root

Assimilated roots behave as sound roots in the Form III AP.

citizen *muwaaTin* مُوَاطِنٌ

11.1.4 Hollow root

Hollow roots also behave as sound roots in the Form III AP.

on duty	<i>munaawib</i>	مُنَاوِب
neutral	<i>muHaayid</i>	مُحَايِد
neighboring, adjacent	<i>mujaawir</i>	مُجَاوِر

11.1.5 Defective root

The Form III defective root AP falls into declension six, the defective declension, where the indefinite form of the noun shows the final root consonant as two *kas-ras* in the nominative and genitive cases. See Chapter 7, section 5.4.3.

lawyer	<i>muHaamin</i>	مُحَامٍ
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11.1.6 Examples of Form III APs in context

الفنون المعاصرة <i>al-funuun-u l-mu[°]aaSirat-u</i> contemporary arts	الدول المعارضة <i>al-duwal-u l-mu[°]aariDat-u</i> the opposing states
الضابط المناوب <i>al-DaabiT-u l-munaawib-u</i> the officer on duty	دولة محايدة <i>dawlat-un muHaayidat-un</i> a neutral country
على المقعد المجاور <i>°alaa l-maq[°]ad-i l-mujaawir-i.</i> on the adjacent seat	محامون أمريكيون <i>muHaam-uuna °amriikiyy-uuna</i> American lawyers

11.2 Form III passive participle (PP): *mufaa[°]al* مُفَاعَل

This particular type of passive participle is infrequent, but does exist:

blessed	<i>mubaarak</i>	مُبَارَك
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شهر رمضان المبارك
shahr-u ramaDaan-a l-mubaarak-u
the blessed month of Ramadan

Form III Sound root: سَاعَدَ ، يُسَاعِدُ AP: مُسَاعِدٌ PP: مُسَاعِدٌ VN: مُسَاعَدَةٌ 'to help'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	سَاعَدْتُ	أُسَاعِدُ	أُسَاعِدَ	أُسَاعِدْ		سُوعِدْتُ	أُسَاعَدُ
أَنْتَ	سَاعَدْتَ	تُسَاعِدُ	تُسَاعِدَ	تُسَاعِدْ	سَاعِدْ	سُوعِدْتَ	تُسَاعَدُ
أَنْتِ	سَاعَدْتِ	تُسَاعِدِينَ	تُسَاعِدِي	تُسَاعِدِي	سَاعِدِي	سُوعِدْتِ	تُسَاعَدِينَ
أَنْتُمْ—m/f	سَاعَدْتُمْ	تُسَاعِدَانِ	تُسَاعِدَا	تُسَاعِدَا	سَاعِدَا	سُوعِدْتُمْ	تُسَاعَدَانِ
هُوَ	سَاعَدَ	يُسَاعِدُ	يُسَاعِدَ	يُسَاعِدْ		سُوعِدَ	يُسَاعَدُ
هِيَ	سَاعَدَتْ	تُسَاعِدُ	تُسَاعِدَ	تُسَاعِدْ		سُوعِدَتْ	تُسَاعَدُ
هُمَا—m	سَاعَدَا	يُسَاعِدَانِ	يُسَاعِدَا	يُسَاعِدَا		سُوعِدَا	يُسَاعَدَانِ
هُمَا—f	سَاعَدَتَا	تُسَاعِدَانِ	تُسَاعِدَا	تُسَاعِدَا		سُوعِدَتَا	تُسَاعَدَانِ
نَحْنُ	سَاعَدْنَا	نُسَاعِدُ	نُسَاعِدَ	نُسَاعِدْ		سُوعِدْنَا	نُسَاعَدُ
أَنْتُمْ	سَاعَدْتُمْ	تُسَاعِدُونَ	تُسَاعِدُوا	تُسَاعِدُوا	سَاعِدُوا	سُوعِدْتُمْ	تُسَاعَدُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	سَاعَدْتُنَّ	تُسَاعِدْنَ	تُسَاعِدْنَ	تُسَاعِدْنَ	سَاعِدْنَ	سُوعِدْتُنَّ	تُسَاعَدْنَ
هُمْ	سَاعَدُوا	يُسَاعِدُونَ	يُسَاعِدُوا	يُسَاعِدُوا		سُوعِدُوا	يُسَاعَدُونَ
هُنَّ	سَاعَدْنَ	يُسَاعِدْنَ	يُسَاعِدْنَ	يُسَاعِدْنَ		سُوعِدْنَ	يُسَاعَدْنَ

Form III hamza-final root: يُفاجئُ فاجأً، يفاجئُ AP: مفاجئٌ PP: مفاجأً VN: مفاجأةٌ 'to surprise'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	فاجأتُ	أُفاجئُ	أُفاجئُ	أُفاجئُ		فوجئتُ	أُفاجأُ
أنتَ	فاجأتَ	تُفاجئُ	تُفاجئُ	تُفاجئُ	فاجئُ	فوجئتَ	تُفاجأُ
أنتِ	فاجأتِ	تُفاجئينَ	تُفاجئِي	تُفاجئِي	فاجئِي	فوجئتِ	تُفاجئينَ
أنتما-m/f	فاجأتما	تُفاجئانِ	تُفاجئَا	تُفاجئَا	فاجئَا	فوجئتما	تُفاجئَانِ
هو	فاجأَ	يفاجئُ	يفاجئُ	يفاجئُ		فوجيَ	يفاجأُ
هيَ	فاجأتَ	تُفاجئُ	تُفاجئُ	تُفاجئُ		فوجئتَ	تُفاجأُ
هما-m	فاجأَ	يفاجئانِ	يفاجئَا	يفاجئَا		فوجيَا	يفاجئَانِ
هما-f	فاجأتَا	تُفاجئَانِ	تُفاجئَا	تُفاجئَا		فوجئتا	تُفاجئَانِ
نحنُ	فاجأنا	نفاجئُ	نفاجئُ	نفاجئُ		فوجئنا	نفاجأُ
أنتم	فاجأتم	تُفاجئُونَ	تُفاجئُوا	تُفاجئُوا	فاجئُوا	فوجئتم	تُفاجئُونَ
أنتنَّ	فاجأتنَّ	تُفاجئِنَ	تُفاجئِنَ	تُفاجئِنَ	فاجئِنَ	فوجئتنَّ	تُفاجئِنَ
هم	فاجئُوا	يفاجئُونَ	يفاجئُوا	يفاجئُوا		فوجئُوا	يفاجئُونَ
هنَّ	فاجأنَّ	يفاجئِنَ	يفاجئِنَ	يفاجئِنَ		فوجئِنَ	يفاجئِنَ

Form III Assimilated root: **وَاجَهَ**، **يُواجِه** AP: **مُواجِه** PP: **مُواجِه** VN: **مُواجهَة** 'to face, confront'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	وَاجَهْتُ	أُواجِه	أُواجِه	أُواجِه		وُوجِهْتُ	أُواجِه
أنت	وَاجَهْتَ	تُواجِه	تُواجِه	تُواجِه	واجِه	وُوجِهْتَ	تُواجِه
أنت	وَاجَهْتَ	تُواجِهين	تُواجِهِي	تُواجِهِي	واجِهِي	وُوجِهْتَ	تُواجِهين
أنتما-m/f	وَاجَهْتُمَا	تُواجِهَانِ	تُواجِهَا	تُواجِهَا	واجِهَا	وُوجِهْتُمَا	تُواجِهَانِ
هو	وَاجَهَ	يُواجِه	يُواجِه	يُواجِه		وُوجِهَ	يُواجِه
هي	وَاجَهَتْ	تُواجِه	تُواجِه	تُواجِه		وُوجِهَتْ	تُواجِه
هما-m	وَاجَها	يُواجِهَانِ	يُواجِهَا	يُواجِهَا		وُوجِها	يُواجِهَانِ
هما-f	وَاجَهْتَا	تُواجِهَانِ	تُواجِهَا	تُواجِهَا		وُوجِهْتَا	تُواجِهَانِ
نحن	وَاجَهْنَا	نُواجِه	نُواجِه	نُواجِه		وُوجِهْنَا	نُواجِه
أنتم	وَاجَهْتُمْ	تُواجِهُونَ	تُواجِهُوا	تُواجِهُوا	واجِهُوا	وُوجِهْتُمْ	تُواجِهُونَ
أنتن	وَاجَهْتُنَّ	تُواجِهْنَ	تُواجِهْنَ	تُواجِهْنَ	واجِهْنَ	وُوجِهْتُنَّ	تُواجِهْنَ
هم	وَاجَهُوا	يُواجِهُونَ	يُواجِهُوا	يُواجِهُوا		وُوجِهُوا	يُواجِهُونَ
هن	وَاجِهْنَ	يُواجِهْنَ	يُواجِهْنَ	يُواجِهْنَ		وُوجِهْنَ	يُواجِهْنَ

Form III Hollow root: **حَاوَلَ** ، **يُحَاوِلُ** AP: **مُحَاوِلٌ** PP: **مُحَاوِلٌ** VN: **مُحَاوَلَةٌ** 'to try'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	حَاوَلْتُ	أُحَاوِلُ	أُحَاوِلَ	أُحَاوِلْ			
أَنْتَ	حَاوَلْتَ	تُحَاوِلُ	تُحَاوِلَ	تُحَاوِلْ	حَاوِلْ		
أَنْتِ	حَاوَلْتِ	تُحَاوِلِينَ	تُحَاوِلِي	تُحَاوِلِي	حَاوِلِي		
أَنْتُمْ-m/f	حَاوَلْتُمْ	تُحَاوِلُونَ	تُحَاوِلُوا	تُحَاوِلُوا	حَاوِلُوا		
هُوَ	حَاوَلَ	يُحَاوِلُ	يُحَاوِلَ	يُحَاوِلْ		حُوِلَ	يُحَاوِلُ
هِيَ	حَاوَلَتْ	تُحَاوِلُ	تُحَاوِلَ	تُحَاوِلْ		حُوِلَتْ	تُحَاوِلُ
هُمَا-m	حَاوَلَا	يُحَاوِلَانِ	يُحَاوِلَا	يُحَاوِلَا			
هُمَا-f	حَاوَلَتَا	تُحَاوِلَانِ	تُحَاوِلَا	تُحَاوِلَا			
نَحْنُ	حَاوَلْنَا	نُحَاوِلُ	نُحَاوِلَ	نُحَاوِلْ			
أَنْتُمْ	حَاوَلْتُمْ	تُحَاوِلُونَ	تُحَاوِلُوا	تُحَاوِلُوا	حَاوِلُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	حَاوَلْتُنَّ	تُحَاوِلْنَ	تُحَاوِلْنَ	تُحَاوِلْنَ	حَاوِلْنَ		
هُمْ	حَاوَلُوا	يُحَاوِلُونَ	يُحَاوِلُوا	يُحَاوِلُوا			
هُنَّ	حَاوَلْنَ	يُحَاوِلْنَ	يُحَاوِلْنَ	يُحَاوِلْنَ			

Form III Defective root: يُنادي ، نادى AP: مُنادٍ PP: مُنادٍ VN: مُناداة 'to call'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	نَادَيْتُ	أُنَادِي	أُنَادِي	أُنَادِ		نُودِيتُ	أُنَادَى
أَنْتَ	نَادَيْتَ	تُنَادِي	تُنَادِي	تُنَادِ	نَادِ	نُودِيتَ	تُنَادَى
أَنْتِ	نَادَيْتِ	تُنَادِينَ	تُنَادِي	تُنَادِي	نَادِي	نُودِيتِ	تُنَادِينَ
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	نَادَيْتُمَا	تُنَادِيَانِ	تُنَادِيَا	تُنَادِيَا	نَادِيَا	نُودِيتُمَا	تُنَادِيَانِ
هُوَ	نَادَى	يُنَادِي	يُنَادِي	يُنَادِ		نُودِيَ	يُنَادَى
هِيَ	نَادَتْ	تُنَادِي	تُنَادِي	تُنَادِ		نُودِيتْ	تُنَادَى
هُمَا—m	نَادَا	يُنَادِيَانِ	يُنَادِيَا	يُنَادِيَا		نُودِيَا	يُنَادِيَانِ
هُمَا—f	نَادَتَا	تُنَادِيَانِ	تُنَادِيَا	تُنَادِيَا		نُودِيَتَا	تُنَادِيَانِ
نَحْنُ	نَادَيْنَا	نُنَادِي	نُنَادِي	نُنَادِ		نُودِينَا	نُنَادَى
أَنْتُمْ	نَادَيْتُمْ	تُنَادُونَ	تُنَادُوا	تُنَادُوا	نَادُوا	نُودِيتُمْ	تُنَادُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	نَادَيْتُنَّ	تُنَادِينَ	تُنَادِينَ	تُنَادِينَ	نَادِينَ	نُودِيتُنَّ	تُنَادِينَ
هُمْ	نَادَوْا	يُنَادُونَ	يُنَادُوا	يُنَادُوا		نُودُوا	يُنَادُونَ
هُنَّ	نَادَيْنَ	يُنَادِينَ	يُنَادِينَ	يُنَادِينَ		نُودِينَ	يُنَادِينَ

Form IV triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *ʾafʿal-a* أَفْعَلَ / *yu-fʿil-u* يُفْعِلُ

Form IV is augmented from Form I by the prefixing of *hamza* plus *fatHa* on the past tense stem. It has the stem pattern *ʾaC₁C₂aC₃* in the past tense and the stem pattern *yu-C₁aC₂iC₃* in the present tense.

1.2 Meaning

Form IV verbs are often causative of Form I. If the Form I verb is intransitive, Form IV is transitive; if the Form I verb is transitive, Form IV may be doubly transitive, taking two objects. Form IV verbs may have meanings similar to Form II verbs. For example, *xabbar-a* and *ʾaxbar-a*, both mean ‘to inform’; *waqqaf-a* and *ʾawqaf-a* both mean ‘to halt, to stop.’ Sometimes the meanings of Form II and Form IV verbs are close but not exactly the same. For example, *ʿallam-a* means ‘to teach’ whereas *ʾaʿlam-a* means ‘to inform.’¹

1.3 Transitivity

Form IV verbs are usually transitive and sometimes doubly transitive.² Intransitive Form IV is rare.³

A doubly transitive Form IV verb may take two objects. It often has the option of marking the indirect object (or beneficiary) with a dative-marking preposition such as *li*.⁴

سيعطيها التذكرة.

sa-yu-ʿTii-haa l-tadhkarat-a.

He will give her the ticket.

¹ Sterling 1904, 51–53 lists four other less common semantic modifications of Form IV: “finding [estimative],” “change,” “motion to,” and “to be in season,” with examples from Classical Arabic. Wright 1967, I:34–36 gives also a denominative meaning for Form IV.

² Kouloughli 1994, 203 estimates 80 percent of Form IV verbs are transitive.

³ One example is: “to grow dark” *ʾaZlam-a/yu-Zlim-u* أَظْلَمَ / يَظْلِمُ.

⁴ For more on double accusatives and use of dative-marking prepositions, see Chapter 4, section 2.5.

1.4 Inflection

Inflectional characteristics of Form IV verbs include:

- (1) the present tense subject-marker vowel is *Damma* and the present tense stem vowel is *kasra* (^ʔakmal-a/ya-kmil-u).
- (2) the prefixed *hamza* plus *fatHa* in the past tense **disappears** in the present tense, replaced by the subject markers.⁵
- (3) the prefixed *hamza* in the past tense is stable (*hamzat al-qaTʿ*) and is not deleted when pronounced after a vowel.

2 Regular (sound) trilateral root: ^ʔafʿal-a أَفْعَلَ / yu-fʿil-u يُفْعِلُ

These verbs are examples of Form IV sound trilateral roots:

to include, insert	^ʔ adraj-a/ya-drij-u	أَدْرَجَ / يَدْرِجُ
to disturb, bother	^ʔ azʿaj-a/ya-zʿij-u	أَزْعَجَ / يَزْعِجُ
to announce	^ʔ aʿlan-a/ya-ʿlin-u	أَعْلَنَ / يَعلِنُ
to supervise	^ʔ ashraf-a/ya-shrif-u	أَشْرَفَ / يَشْرِفُ
to send	^ʔ arsal-a/ya-rsil-u	أَرْسَلَ / يَرْسِلُ
to please	^ʔ aʿjab-a/ya-ʿjib-u	أَعْجَبَ / يَعْجِبُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form IV: ^ʔafaʿʿ-a أَفَعَّأَ / yu-fʿʿ-i يُفَعِّعُ

The geminate root in Form IV behaves very much as Form I geminates. The geminate or doubled consonant is doubled and written with *shadda* when followed by a vowel suffix and it separates into two separate consonants when followed by a suffix that begins with a consonant.

to feel, perceive, sense	^ʔ aHass-a/ya-Hiss-u	أَحْصَى / يَحْصِي
to like, to love	^ʔ aHabb-a/ya-Hibb-u	أَحَبَّ / يَحِبُّ
to persist in, insist on	^ʔ aSarr-a/ya-Sirr-u ʿalaa	أَصْرَّ / يَصِرُّ عَلَى
to prepare	^ʔ aʿadd-a/ya-ʿidd-u	أَعَدَّ / يَعِدُّ

⁵ This has the effect of making unvoveled Form IV verbs resemble Form I verbs in written Arabic. For verbs which exist in both forms (for example, *Sadar-a/ya-Sdur-u* يَصْدُرُ / صَدَرَ 'to emanate, come out' and *ʔaSadar-a/ya-Sdir-u* يَصْدِرُ / أَصْدَرَ 'to publish'), context is used to disambiguate form as well as meaning.

4 Hamzated roots in Form IV

4.1 Initial *hamza*

In Form IV, initial root *hamza* merges with the prefix *hamza* in the past tense and they are written as one *ʿalif* with a *madda* over it. In the present tense, initial *hamza* sits on a *waaw* seat because it is preceded by the *Damma* of the person-marking prefix:

to believe, have faith	ʿaaman-a/ʷu-ʷmin-u	أَمَّنَ / يُؤْمِنُ
to rent out, to lease	ʿaajar-a/ʷu-ʷjir-u	أَجَرَ / يُؤْجِرُ

4.2 Medial *hamza*

The medial *hamza* sits on an *ʿalif* seat in the past tense. In the present tense it sits on a *yaaʿ* seat because it is followed by a *kasra*.

to comply with someone's request	ʿasʿal-a/ʷu-sʿil-u	أَسْأَلَ / يُسْأَلُ
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4.3 Final *hamza*

Final *hamza* may sit on an *ʿalif* seat in the past tense, but because it is the final consonant in the stem, the seat of *hamza* may shift with certain suffixes:

to set up, establish	ʿanshaʿ-a / ʷu-nshiʿ-u	أَنْشَأَ / يُنْشِئُ
to extinguish	ʿaTfaʿ-a/ʷu-Tfiʿ-u	أَطْفَأَ / يُطْفِئُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form IV: ʿafʿal-a / ʷuu-ʿil-u يُوْعَلُ / أُفْعِلُ

In the past tense of Form IV, the initial *waaw* or *yaaʿ* of the assimilated root behaves as a regular consonant. In the present tense, however, it assimilates to the vowel /u/ of the subject-marking prefix and becomes long /uu/.

to explain, clarify	ʿawDaH-a/ʷuuDiH-u	أَوْضَحَ / يُوَضِّحُ
to halt, stop	ʿawqaf-a/ʷuuqif-u	أَوْقَفَ / يُوَقِّفُ
to awaken	ʿayqaZ-a/ʷuuqiZ-u	أَيْقَظَ / يُوَقِّظُ
to bring, convey 'to cause to arrive'	ʿawSal-a/ʷuuSil-u	أَوْصَلَ / يُوَصِّلُ

6 Hollow roots in Form IV: ʿafaal-a / ʷu-fiil-u أَفْعِلُ / يُفْعِلُ

The semi-consonants *waaw* and *yaaʿ* of hollow roots in Form IV show up as *ʿalif* (long stem) and *fatHa* (short stem) in the past tense and *yaaʿ* and *kasra* in the present tense stem. The pattern is *ʿafaal-a / ʷu-fiil-u*. Examples of both stems are given

in both tenses: in addition to the standard citation form of third person masculine singular, first person singular (in the past), and third person feminine plural (in the present).

to broadcast	^ʔ adhaa ^ʕ -a (^ʔ adha ^ʕ -tu)	أَذَاعَ (أَذَعْتُ)
	/yu-dhii ^ʕ -u (yudhi ^ʕ -na)	/يُذِيعُ (يُذِيعُنَ)
to manage, administer	^ʔ adaar-a (^ʔ adar-tu)	أَدَارَ (أَدَرْتُ)
	/yu-diir-u (yu-dir-na)	/يُدِيرُ (يُدِيرُنَ)

7 Defective roots in Form IV: ^ʔaf^ʕaa أَفْعَى / *yu-f^ʕii* يُفْعِي

Defective roots, where the final radical is either *waaw* or *yaa*⁶, behave as *-aa/-ii* verbs in Form IV. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently /a/ in the past tense and /i/ in the present tense.

to eliminate	^ʔ alghaa/yu-lghi	أَلْغَى / يُلْغِي
to conduct, to run	^ʔ ajraa/yu-jrii	أَجْرَى / يُجْرِي
to throw; to deliver (a speech)	^ʔ alqaa/yu-lqii	أَلْقَى / يُلْقِي
to give	^ʔ a ^ʕ Taa/yu- ^ʕ Tii	أَعْطَى / يُعْطِي

8 Doubly weak roots in Form IV

8.1 *Hamza*-initial, hollow, and defective

to shelter, accommodate (from ^ʔ w-y ‘to seek refuge’)	^ʔ aawaa/yu- ^ʔ wii ⁶	أَوَى / يُؤْوِي
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8.2 *Hamza*-medial and defective

to show (s.o. s.th.) (‘to cause to see’)	^ʔ araa/yu-rii ⁷ (from r- ^ʔ -y ‘to see’)	أَرَى / يُرِي
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8.3 *Hamza*-final and hollow

to harm, to hurt	^ʔ asaa ^ʔ -a/yu-sii ^ʔ -u	أَسَاءَ / يُسِيْءُ
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9. Exclamatory Form IV (*fi^ʕl al-ta^ʕajjub* فِعْلُ التَعْجَبِ)

A Form IV verb in the citation form (3 m.sg. past tense) may be used in written Arabic preceded by the function word *maa* to indicate surprise, wonder, or astonishment

⁶ The initial root *hamza* merges with the prefix *hamza* in the past tense and the initial vowel /a/ lengthens to /aa/.

⁷ This verb in Form IV has lost its root *hamza* completely and inflects as a defective *-aa/-ii* verb.

at a certain quality or characteristic of something or someone. It is followed by a noun in the accusative, or a pronoun suffix that denotes the possessor of the quality. The occurrence of this construction in media Arabic is rare, but it is found in literary contexts.

The verbs used in this type of construction are usually related to adjectival roots and are sometimes referred to as “adjectival verbs.”⁸ They are also termed “verbs of surprise or admiration” (Cowan 1964, 177). Cantarino describes the word following *maa* as “an elative in the accusative of exclamation” (1974–76, II:210), that is, as a comparative adjective. See also in this book Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.12 on “less frequent accusatives.”

ما أجمل البيت!
maa ʾajmal-a l-bint-a!
How beautiful the girl is!

ما ألطفهم!
*maa ʾalTaf-a-hum!*⁹
How nice they are!

10 Examples of Form IV verbs in context

فأوضحت ما تقصده.
fa-ʾawDaH-at maa ta-qSid-u-hu.
She clarified what she meant.

أجرى محادثات مع بعض المسؤولين.
ʾajraa muHaadathaat-in maʿ-a baʿD-i l-masʾuul-iina.
He conducted talks with some officials.

لا يضيف أشياء جديدة.
laa yu-Diif-u ʾashyaaʾ-a jadiidat-an.
It does not add anything new (‘new things’).

أهداني كتاباً قيماً.
ʾahdaa-nii kitaab-an qayyim-an.
He gave me a valuable book.

هناك أفضلية لمن يجيد اللغة الإنكليزية.
hunaaka ʾafDaliyyat-un li-man yu-jiid-u l-lughat-a l-ʾinkliiziyyat-a.
There is a preference for whomever is proficient in English.

أعربت عن أسفها.
ʾaʿrab-at ʿan ʾasafi-haa.
She expressed her sorrow.

11 Verbal noun of Form IV: ʾifʿaal إفعال

The verbal noun of Form IV normally has the pattern ʾifʿaal.

11.1 Sound/regular root

announcement	ʾiʿlaan	إِعْلَان	sending	ʾirsaal	إِرْسَال
disturbance, bother	ʾizʿaaj	إِزْعَاج	bankruptcy	ʾiflaas	إِفْلَاس

⁸ See Abboud and McCarus 1976, Part 2:272.

⁹ These examples are taken from *The MECAS Grammar* 1965, 239. See also Fischer 2002, 80.

11.2 Geminate root

The geminate root maintains the ^ʔ*ifaa*l pattern, splitting the doubled consonant:

perception, sensation	^ʔ iHsaas	إِحْسَاسٌ	preparation	^ʔ i ^ˁ daad	إِعْدَادٌ
injury, harm	^ʔ iDraar	إِضْرَارٌ	insistence, persistence	^ʔ iSraar	إِصْرَارٌ

11.3 Hamzated root

11.3.1 Hamza-initial root

The verbal noun of hamza-initial roots in Form IV lengthens the *kasra* of the initial syllable into long /ii/ and deletes the root *hamza*:

faith	^ʔ iimaan (*instead of ^ʔ i ^ˁ maan)	إِيمَانٌ	rent, renting	^ʔ iijaar (*instead of ^ʔ i ^ˁ jaar)	إِيجَارٌ
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11.3.2 Hamza-final root

In this verbal noun, the *hamza* sits aloof after the ^ʔ*alif*.

establishment, setting up	^ʔ inshaa ^ʔ	إِنشَاءٌ	extinguishing	^ʔ iTfaa ^ʔ	إِطْفَاءٌ
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11.4 Assimilated root: ^ʔii^ˁaal إِيْعَالٌ

In the verbal nouns of Form IV assimilated verbs, the initial *waaw* or *yaa^ʔ* of the root is assimilated to the *kasra* /i/ of the initial *hamza*, and it lengthens to /ii/, i.e., ^ʔ*if^ˁaal* becomes ^ʔ*ii^ˁaal*.

clarification	^ʔ iiDaaH	إِيْضَاحٌ	bringing, conveying	^ʔ iiSaal	إِيْصَالٌ
stopping, halting	^ʔ iiqaaf	إِيْقَافٌ	awakening	^ʔ iiqaaZ	إِيْقَازٌ

11.5 Hollow root: ^ʔifaala إِفَالَةٌ

The verbal noun of Form IV hollow roots is ^ʔ*ifaala* إِفَالَةٌ, ending with *taa^ʔ* *marbuuTa*.

inflicting	^ʔ iSaaba	إِصَابَةٌ	administration	^ʔ idaara	إِدَارَةٌ
broadcasting	^ʔ idhaa ^ˁ a	إِذَاعَةٌ	repetition	^ʔ i ^ˁ aada	إِعَادَةٌ

11.6 Defective root: ^ʔif^ˁaa^ʔ إِفْعَاءٌ

In the Form IV verbal noun of defective verbs, the defective semi-consonant (*waaw* or *yaa^ʔ*) disappears and is replaced by *hamza*, i.e., ^ʔ*if^ˁaal* becomes ^ʔ*if^ˁaa^ʔ* إِفْعَاءٌ.

elimination	^ʔ ilghaa ^ʔ	إِلْغَاءٌ	conducting	^ʔ ijraa ^ʔ	إِجْرَاءٌ
giving	^ʔ i ^ˁ Taa ^ʔ	إِعْطَاءٌ	delivery (of a speech)	^ʔ ilqaa ^ʔ	إِلْقَاءٌ

11.7 Examples of Form IV verbal nouns in context

إنعاش الاقتصاد

ⁱⁿ‘aash-u l-iqtisaa*d*-i

reviving the economy

إسعاف الدفاع المدني الفوري

^{is}‘aaf-u l-difaa‘-i l-madaniyy-i l-fawriyy-u

emergency civil defense aid

لا يريد إرسال قوات أمريكية إلى الخارج.

laa yu-riid-u ^{irsaal}-a quwwaat-in ^{amriikiyyat}-in ^{ilaa} l-xaarij-i.

He doesn't want to send American forces abroad.

حاول إنقاذ حياة رجل.

Haawal-a ^{inqaad}-a Hayaat-i rajul-in.

He tried to save a man's life.

مشكلة إدمان المخدرات

mushkilat-u ^{idmaan}-i l-mukhaddir-aat-i

the problem of drug addiction

بيت للإيجار

bayt-un li-l-^{iijaa}-i

a house for rent

إيقاظ الاهتمام

^{iiqaa}Z-u l-ihtimaam-i

the awakening of interest

12 Form IV participles

Form IV participles occur as nouns and as adjectives. In some cases they occur in both functions.

12.1 Form IV active participle (AP): *muf*‘il مَفْعِلٌ

12.1.1 Sound/regular root

Muslim

muslim

مُسْلِمٌ

possible

mumkin

مُمْكِنٌ

supervisor; supervising

mushrif

مُشْرِفٌ

rainy

mumTir

مُمْطِرٌ

director (stage or screen)

muxrij

مُخْرِجٌ

snowy

muthlij

مُثَلِّجٌ

12.1.2 Geminate root: *mufi*‘c مَفْعِ‘c

The final two consonants of the geminate root are written together, with no intervening vowel. Thus instead of being in the pattern *mufi*‘l, they are of the pattern *mufi*‘c مَفْعِ‘c

tedious, boring

mumill

مُمِلٌ

injurious,
harmful

muDirr

مُضِرٌّ

insistent, determined

muSirr

مُصِرٌّ

preparing,
preparer

mu‘idd

مُعِدٌّ

12.1.3 Hamzated root

12.1.3.1 Hamza-INITIAL

faithful

mu‘min

مُؤْمِنٌ

regrettable

mu‘sif

مُؤْسِفٌ

12.1.3.2 Hamza-FINAL:

founder	<i>munshi</i> ^ʔ	مُنْشِئٌ	mistaken	<i>muxTi</i> ^ʔ	مُخْطِئٌ
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12.1.4 Assimilated root: *muu^oil* موَعِل

In this root type, the initial *waaw* assimilates to the *Damma* of the *miim*-prefix and yields a long *-uu-* as the first vowel.

clarifying	<i>muuDiH</i>	مَوْضِحٌ	consignor, depositor	<i>muudi^o</i>	مَوْدِعٌ
originator	<i>muujid</i>	مَوْجِدٌ	deep-reaching	<i>muughil</i>	مَوْغِلٌ

12.1.5 Hollow root: *mufiil* مُفِيل

ocean	<i>muHiit</i>	مُحِيطٌ	manager; director	<i>mudiir</i>	مُدِيرٌ
broadcaster	<i>mudhii^o</i>	مُذِيعٌ	beneficial	<i>mufiid</i>	مُفِيدٌ

12.1.6 Defective root: *muf^oin* مُفْعِن

giver; giving	<i>mu^oTin</i>	مُعْطٍ	mufti, giver of formal legal opinions	<i>muftin</i>	مُفْتٍ
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12.1.7 Examples of Form IV APs in context

اللجنة المشرفة <i>al-lajnat-u l-mushrifat-u</i> the supervising committee	بتقديم كل المساعدة الممكنة <i>bi-taqdiim-i kull-i l-musaa^oadat-i l-mumkinat-i</i> by offering all possible aid
بسرعة مذهلة <i>bi-sur^oat-in mudhhiilat-in</i> with amazing speed	شيء مؤسف جداً <i>shay^o-un mu^osif-un jidd-an</i> a very regrettable thing
المحيط الأطلسي <i>al-muHiit-u l-^oaTlasiyy-u</i> the Atlantic Ocean	سماحة المفتي <i>samaaHat-u l-muftii</i> His Eminence the Mufti

12.2 Form IV passive participle (PP): *muf^oal* مُفْعَل

12.2.1 Sound/regular root

lexicon	<i>mu^ojam</i>	مُعْجَمٌ	compacted	<i>mudmaj</i>	مُدْمَجٌ
singular word	<i>mufrad</i>	مُفْرَدٌ	attaché, officer	<i>mulHaq</i>	مُلْحَقٌ

12.2.2 Geminate root: *mufa^occ* مُفَعَّع

The final two consonants of the root fall together, with no intervening vowel.

ready, prepared	<i>mu^oadd</i>	مُعَدٌّ
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12.2.3 Hamzated root

foundation, establishment; *munsha'a* مُنْشَأَةٌ
installation

12.2.4 Assimilated root: *muu^eal* مَوْعَلٌ

summary *muujaz* مُوجَزٌ

12.2.5 Hollow root: *mufa^aal* مُفَالٌ

melted, dissolved *mudhaab* مُذَابٌ injured, afflicted *muSaab* مُصَابٌ

12.2.6 Defective root: *muf^ean* مُفْعَى

abolished; abrogated *mulghan* مُلْغَى cast off; discarded *mulqan* مُلْقَى

12.2.7 Examples of Form IV PPs in context

ملحق الشؤون الثقافية

mulHaq-u l-shu'uun-i l-thaqaafiyyat-i

cultural affairs attaché

معجم مفصل

mu'jam-un mufaSSal-un

a detailed lexicon

موجز الأخبار

muujaz-u l-^oaxbaar-i

summary of the news

حلقة مفرغة

Halqat-un mufraghat-un

a vicious circle ('a seamless circle')

قرص مدمج

qurS-un mudmaj-un

a compact disk

الأكسجين المذاب في الماء

al-^ouuksiijin-u l-mudhaab-u fii l-maa^o-i

oxygen dissolved in water

Form IV Sound root: ^{أُرْسِلَ}، ^{يُرْسَلُ} AP: ^{مُرْسِلٌ} PP: ^{مُرْسَلٌ} VN: ^{إِرْسَالٌ} 'to send'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	^{أُرْسَلْتُ}	^{أُرْسِلُ}	^{أُرْسِلَ}	^{أُرْسِلْ}		^{أُرْسِلْتُ}	^{أُرْسَلُ}
أَنْتَ	^{أُرْسَلْتَ}	^{تُرْسِلُ}	^{تُرْسِلَ}	^{تُرْسِلْ}	^{أُرْسِلْ}	^{أُرْسِلْتَ}	^{تُرْسَلُ}
أَنْتِ	^{أُرْسَلْتِ}	^{تُرْسِلِينَ}	^{تُرْسِلِي}	^{تُرْسِلِي}	^{أُرْسِلِي}	^{أُرْسَلْتِ}	^{تُرْسَلِينَ}
أَنْتُمْ-m/f	^{أُرْسَلْتُمْ}	^{تُرْسِلَانِ}	^{تُرْسِلَا}	^{تُرْسِلَا}	^{أُرْسِلَا}	^{أُرْسَلْتُمْ}	^{تُرْسِلَانِ}
هُوَ	^{أُرْسِلَ}	^{يُرْسِلُ}	^{يُرْسِلَ}	^{يُرْسِلْ}		^{أُرْسِلَ}	^{يُرْسَلُ}
هِيَ	^{أُرْسِلَتْ}	^{تُرْسِلُ}	^{تُرْسِلَ}	^{تُرْسِلْ}		^{أُرْسِلَتْ}	^{تُرْسَلُ}
هُمَا-m	^{أُرْسِلَا}	^{يُرْسِلَانِ}	^{يُرْسِلَا}	^{يُرْسِلَا}		^{أُرْسِلَا}	^{يُرْسِلَانِ}
هُمَا-f	^{أُرْسِلَتَا}	^{تُرْسِلَانِ}	^{تُرْسِلَا}	^{تُرْسِلَا}		^{أُرْسِلَتَا}	^{تُرْسِلَانِ}
نَحْنُ	^{أُرْسَلْنَا}	^{نُرْسِلُ}	^{نُرْسِلَ}	^{نُرْسِلْ}		^{أُرْسَلْنَا}	^{نُرْسَلُ}
أَنْتُمْ	^{أُرْسَلْتُمْ}	^{تُرْسِلُونَ}	^{تُرْسِلُوا}	^{تُرْسِلُوا}	^{أُرْسِلُوا}	^{أُرْسَلْتُمْ}	^{تُرْسِلُونَ}
أَنْتُمْ	^{أُرْسَلْتُمْ}	^{تُرْسِلْنَ}	^{تُرْسِلْنَ}	^{تُرْسِلْنَ}	^{أُرْسِلْنَ}	^{أُرْسَلْتُمْ}	^{تُرْسِلْنَ}
هُمْ	^{أُرْسِلُوا}	^{يُرْسِلُونَ}	^{يُرْسِلُوا}	^{يُرْسِلُوا}		^{أُرْسِلُوا}	^{يُرْسِلُونَ}
هُنَّ	^{أُرْسِلْنَ}	^{يُرْسِلْنَ}	^{يُرْسِلْنَ}	^{يُرْسِلْنَ}		^{أُرْسِلْنَ}	^{يُرْسِلْنَ}

Form IV Geminate root: ^{عَدَّ} أَعَدَّ، ^{يَعِدُّ} يَأْذَنُ AP: ^{مَعَدَّ} مَعَدَّ PP: ^{مَعْدٍ} مَعْدٍ VN: ^{إِعْدَادٌ} 'إِعْدَادٌ' 'to prepare'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive*	Imperative**		
أَنَا	أَعَدْتُ	أُعِدُّ	أُعِدَّ	أُعِدَّ		أُعِدْتُ	أُعِدَّ
أَنْتَ	أَعَدْتِ	تُعِدُّ	تُعِدَّ	تُعِدَّ	أَعِدَّ	أَعَدْتِ	تُعِدَّ
أَنْتِ	أَعَدَّتِ	تُعِدِّينَ	تُعِدِّي	تُعِدِّي	أَعِدِّي	أَعَدَّتِ	تُعِدِّي
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	أَعَدْتُمَا	تُعِدَانِ	تُعِدَا	تُعِدَا	أَعِدَا	أَعَدْتُمَا	تُعِدَانِ
هُوَ	أَعَدَّ	يُعِدُّ	يُعِدَّ	يُعِدَّ		أَعَدَّ	يُعِدَّ
هِيَ	أَعَدَتْ	تُعِدُّ	تُعِدَّ	تُعِدَّ		أَعَدَتْ	تُعِدَّ
هُمَا—m	أَعَدَا	يُعِدَانِ	يُعِدَا	يُعِدَا		أَعَدَا	يُعِدَانِ
هُمَا—f	أَعَدَتَا	تُعِدَانِ	تُعِدَا	تُعِدَا		أَعَدَتَا	تُعِدَانِ
نَحْنُ	أَعَدَدْنَا	نُعِدُّ	نُعِدَّ	نُعِدَّ		أَعَدَدْنَا	نُعِدَّ
أَنْتُمْ	أَعَدَدْتُمْ	تُعِدُّونَ	تُعِدُّوا	تُعِدُّوا	أَعِدُّوا	أَعَدَدْتُمْ	تُعِدُّونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	أَعَدَدْتُنَّ	تُعِدِّينَ	تُعِدِّينَ	تُعِدِّينَ	أَعِدِّينَ	أَعَدَدْتُنَّ	تُعِدِّينَ
هُمْ	أَعَدُّوا	يُعِدُّونَ	يُعِدُّوا	يُعِدُّوا		أَعَدُّوا	يُعِدُّونَ
هُنَّ	أَعَدَدْنَ	يُعِدِّينَ	يُعِدِّينَ	يُعِدِّينَ		أَعَدَدْنَ	يُعِدِّينَ

*Also يعددوا ; تعددوا ; نعدد ; تعدد ; يعدد ; تعددا ; تعددي ; تعدد ; أعدد

أَعِدُّوا ; أَعِدُّا ; أَعِدِّي **Also

Form IV hamza-final: ^{أُنْشَأَ}، ^{يُنْشِئُ} AP: ^{مُنْشِئٌ} PP: ^{مُنْشَأٌ} VN: ^{إِنْشَاءٌ} 'to establish'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	^{أُنْشَأْتُ}	^{أُنْشِئُ}	^{أُنْشِئَ}	^{أُنْشِئْ}		^{أُنْشِئْتُ}	^{أُنْشِئْ}
أَنْتَ	^{أُنْشَأْتَ}	^{تُنْشِئُ}	^{تُنْشِئَ}	^{تُنْشِئْ}	^{أُنْشِئْ}	^{أُنْشِئْتَ}	^{تُنْشِئْ}
أَنْتِ	^{أُنْشَأْتِ}	^{تُنْشِئِينَ}	^{تُنْشِئِي}	^{تُنْشِئِي}	^{أُنْشِئِي}	^{أُنْشِئْتِ}	^{يُنْشِئِينَ}
أَنْتُمْ-m/f	^{أُنْشَأْتُمْ}	^{تُنْشِئَانِ}	^{تُنْشِئَا}	^{تُنْشِئَا}	^{أُنْشِئَا}	^{أُنْشِئْتُمْ}	^{تُنْشِئَانِ}
هُوَ	^{أُنْشَأَ}	^{يُنْشِئُ}	^{يُنْشِئَ}	^{يُنْشِئْ}		^{أُنْشِئَ}	^{يُنْشِئْ}
هِيَ	^{أُنْشَأَتْ}	^{تُنْشِئُ}	^{تُنْشِئَ}	^{تُنْشِئْ}		^{أُنْشِئَتْ}	^{تُنْشِئْ}
هُمَا-m	^{أُنْشَأَ}	^{يُنْشِئَانِ}	^{يُنْشِئَا}	^{يُنْشِئَا}		^{أُنْشِئَا}	^{يُنْشِئَانِ}
هُمَا-f	^{أُنْشَأَتَا}	^{تُنْشِئَانِ}	^{تُنْشِئَا}	^{تُنْشِئَا}		^{أُنْشِئَتَا}	^{تُنْشِئَانِ}
نَحْنُ	^{أُنْشَأْنَا}	^{نُنْشِئُ}	^{نُنْشِئَ}	^{نُنْشِئْ}		^{أُنْشِئْنَا}	^{نُنْشِئْ}
أَنْتُمْ	^{أُنْشَأْتُمْ}	^{تُنْشِئُونَ}	^{تُنْشِئُوا}	^{تُنْشِئُوا}	^{أُنْشِئُوا}	^{أُنْشِئْتُمْ}	^{تُنْشِئُونَ}
أَنْتَنَّ	^{أُنْشَأْتَنَّ}	^{تُنْشِئَنَّ}	^{تُنْشِئَنَّ}	^{تُنْشِئَنَّ}	^{أُنْشِئَنَّ}	^{أُنْشِئْتَنَّ}	^{تُنْشِئَنَّ}
هُمْ	^{أُنْشِئُوا}	^{يُنْشِئُونَ}	^{يُنْشِئُوا}	^{يُنْشِئُوا}		^{أُنْشِئُوا}	^{يُنْشِئُونَ}
هِنَّ	^{أُنْشِئْنَ}	^{يُنْشِئْنَ}	^{يُنْشِئْنَ}	^{يُنْشِئْنَ}		^{أُنْشِئْنَ}	^{يُنْشِئْنَ}

Form IV Assimilated root: ^{أَوْضَحَ}، ^{يُوضِحُ} AP: ^{مَوْضِحٌ} PP: ^{مَوْضِعٌ} VN: ^{إِضْاحٌ} 'to clarify'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَوْضَحْتُ	أَوْضِحُ	أَوْضِحَ	أَوْضِحْ			
أَنْتَ	أَوْضَحْتَ	تَوْضِحُ	تَوْضِحَ	تَوْضِحْ	أَوْضِحْ		
أَنْتِ	أَوْضَحْتِ	تَوْضِحِينَ	تَوْضِحِي	تَوْضِحِي	أَوْضِحِي		
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	أَوْضَحْتُمَا	تَوْضِحَانِ	تَوْضِحَا	تَوْضِحَا	أَوْضِحَا		
هُوَ	أَوْضَحَ	يُوضِحُ	يُوضِحَ	يُوضِحْ		أُوضِحَ	يُوضِحُ
هِيَ	أَوْضَحَتْ	تَوْضِحُ	تَوْضِحَ	تَوْضِحْ		أُوضِحَتْ	تُوضِحُ
هُمَا-m	أَوْضَحَا	يُوضِحَانِ	يُوضِحَا	يُوضِحَا			
هُمَا-f	أَوْضَحَتَا	تُوضِحَانِ	تُوضِحَا	تُوضِحَا			
نَحْنُ	أَوْضَحْنَا	نُوضِحُ	نُوضِحَ	نُوضِحْ			
أَنْتُمْ	أَوْضَحْتُمْ	تُوضِحُونَ	تُوضِحُوا	تُوضِحُوا	أَوْضِحُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	أَوْضَحْتُنَّ	تُوضِحْنَ	تُوضِحْنَ	تُوضِحْنَ	أَوْضِحْنَ		
هُمْ	أَوْضَحُوا	يُوضِحُونَ	يُوضِحُوا	يُوضِحُوا			
هُنَّ	أَوْضَحْنَ	يُوضِحْنَ	يُوضِحْنَ	يُوضِحْنَ			

Form IV Hollow root: أَذَاعَ ، يُذِيعُ AP: مَذِيعٌ PP: مَذَاعٌ VN: إِذَاعَةٌ 'to broadcast'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَذَعْتُ	أُذِيعُ	أُذِيعَ	أُذِعْ		أُذِيعْتُ	أُذَاعُ
أَنْتَ	أَذَعْتَ	تُذِيعُ	تُذِيعَ	تُذِعْ	أَذِعْ	أُذِيعْتَ	تُذَاعُ
أَنْتِ	أَذَعْتِ	تُذِيعِينَ	تُذِيعِي	تُذِيعِي	أُذِيعِي	أُذِيعْتِ	تُذَاعِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	أَذَعْتُمَا	تُذِيعَانِ	تُذِيعَا	تُذِيعَا	أُذِيعَا	أُذِيعْتُمَا	تُذَاعَانِ
هُوَ	أَذَاعَ	يُذِيعُ	يُذِيعَ	يُذِعْ		أُذِيعَ	يُذَاعُ
هِيَ	أَذَاعَتْ	تُذِيعُ	تُذِيعَ	تُذِعْ		أُذِيعَتْ	تُذَاعُ
هُمَا-m	أَذَاعَا	يُذِيعَانِ	يُذِيعَا	يُذِيعَا		أُذِيعَا	يُذَاعَانِ
هُمَا-f	أَذَاعَتَا	تُذِيعَانِ	تُذِيعَا	تُذِيعَا		أُذِيعَتَا	تُذَاعَانِ
نَحْنُ	أَذَعْنَا	نُذِيعُ	نُذِيعَ	نُذِعْ		أُذِيعْنَا	نُذَاعُ
أَنْتُمْ	أَذَعْتُمْ	تُذِيعُونَ	تُذِيعُوا	تُذِيعُوا	أُذِيعُوا	أُذِيعْتُمْ	تُذَاعُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	أَذَعْتُنَّ	تُذِيعْنَ	تُذِيعْنَ	تُذِيعْنَ	أُذِيعْنَ	أُذِيعْتُنَّ	تُذَاعْنَ
هُمْ	أَذَاعُوا	يُذِيعُونَ	يُذِيعُوا	يُذِيعُوا		أُذِيعُوا	يُذَاعُونَ
هُنَّ	أَذَعْنَ	يُذِيعْنَ	يُذِيعْنَ	يُذِيعْنَ		أُذِيعْنَ	يُذَاعْنَ

Form IV Defective: يُلْغِي، أُلْغِيَ AP: مَلَّغَ PP: مَلَّغَى VN: إِلْغَاءٌ 'to abolish'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَلْغَيْتُ	أُلْغِي	أُلْغِي	أُلْغِ		أُلْغِيتُ	أُلْغَى
أَنْتَ	أَلْغَيْتَ	تُلْغِي	تُلْغِي	تُلْغِ	أُلْغِ	أُلْغِيتَ	تُلْغَى
أَنْتِ	أَلْغَيْتِ	تُلْغِينَ	تُلْغِي	تُلْغِي	أُلْغِي	أُلْغِيتِ	تُلْغِينَ
أَنْتَما-m/f	أَلْغَيْتَما	تُلْغِيَانِ	تُلْغِيَا	تُلْغِيَا	أُلْغِيَا	أُلْغِيتَما	تُلْغِيَانِ
هُوَ	أَلْغَى	يُلْغِي	يُلْغِي	يُلْغِ		أُلْغِيَ	يُلْغَى
هِيَ	أَلْغَتْ	تُلْغِي	تُلْغِي	تُلْغِ		أُلْغِيتْ	تُلْغَى
هُما-m	أَلْغَا	يُلْغِيَانِ	يُلْغِيَا	يُلْغِيَا		أُلْغِيَا	يُلْغِيَانِ
هُما-f	أَلْغَتَا	تُلْغِيَانِ	تُلْغِيَا	تُلْغِيَا		أُلْغِيَتَا	تُلْغِيَانِ
نَحْنُ	أَلْغَيْنَا	نُلْغِي	نُلْغِي	نُلْغِ		أُلْغِينَا	نُلْغَى
أَنْتُمْ	أَلْغَيْتُمْ	تُلْغُونَ	تُلْغُوا	تُلْغُوا	أَلْغُوا	أُلْغِيتُمْ	تُلْغُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	أَلْغَيْتُنَّ	تُلْغِينَ	تُلْغِينَ	تُلْغِينَ	أَلْغِينَ	أُلْغِيتُنَّ	تُلْغِينَ
هُمْ	أَلْغَوْا	يُلْغُونَ	يُلْغُوا	يُلْغُوا		أُلْغَوْا	يُلْغُونَ
هُنَّ	أَلْغَيْنَ	يُلْغِينَ	يُلْغِينَ	يُلْغِينَ		أُلْغَيْنَ	يُلْغِينَ

Form V triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *tafa^cal-a* تَفَعَّلَ / *ya-tafa^cal-u* يَتَفَعَّلُ

Form V verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that the medial consonant of the triliteral root is doubled (as in Form II) and a prefix *ta-* is added to the stem.¹ In the present tense, the subject-marking prefix vowel is *fatHa* and the two stem vowels are *fatHa*. Form V verbs thus have the stem patterns **taC₁aC₂C₂aC₃** in the past tense and **ya-taC₁aC₂C₂aC₃** in the present.²

1.2 Meaning

In many cases Form V is the reflexive of the Form II verb, meaning that the action expressed in Form II is done to or happens to one's self. This is sometimes referred to by grammarians as mediopassive.³ Form V may also be resultative of Form II, showing the result of the Form II action, e.g., *kassar-tu-haa fa-takassar-at* 'I broke it (Form II) and it broke (Form V).'⁴ Other semantic modifications embodied in this form include gradual progress in an activity or state (e.g., *taHassan-a* 'to improve,' *tadaxxal-a* 'to meddle, to interfere,' *tamazzaq-a* 'to be ripped apart, fragmented') and acquisition or imitation of a quality (e.g., *ta'assaf-a* 'to be or act sorry'; *ta'addab-a* 'to behave courteously').

¹ The prefixed *ta-*, used as a derivational affix is often characterized as a marker of reflexive action or even of the passive. "Its main derivational function is that of the passive" (Cowell 1964, 85). In more recent studies of this form, it is said often to represent "unaccusative" constructions in Arabic. See Mahmoud 1991 for further discussion of both Form V and Form VII as Arabic counterparts for unaccusative structures.

² Note that in the present tense, there is both an inflectional prefix (the subject marker) and a derivational prefix (the *ta-* of Form V).

³ "No grammatical distinction is made in Arabic verbs between 'reflexive' acts and spontaneous developments – what one does to one's self and what simply happens to one are equally accommodated by the mediopassive" (Cowell 1964, 238).

⁴ The Arabic term used to refer to the resultative meaning of derived forms (especially V, VII, and VIII) is *muTaawa'a* مطاوعة 'obedience, conformity' or *muTaawi* مطاوع 'obedient, conforming' – that is, conforming with a particular, lexically related action. Fleisch 1979 states (II:305) "Ce *muTaawi* exprime l'état dans lequel se trouve un sujet, sous l'action . . . [d'un verbe] précédente."

1.3 Transitivity

Form V verbs are often reflexive or intransitive, but they may be transitive as well.

1.4 Inflection

Inflectional characteristics of Form V verbs:

The present tense subject-marker vowel is *fatHa* and the present tense stem vowel is *fatHa* (*taqaddam-a/ya-taqaddam-u*).

2 Regular (sound) trilateral root

These verbs are examples of Form V sound trilateral roots:

to breathe	<i>tanaffas-a/ya-tanaffas-u</i>	تَنَفَّسَ / يَتَنَفَّسُ
to move, be in motion	<i>taHarrak-a/ya-taHarrak-u</i>	تَحَرَّكَ / يَتَحَرَّكُ
to require	<i>taTallab-a/ya-taTallab-u</i>	تَطَلَّبَ / يَطَلِّبُ
to speak	<i>takallam-a/ya-takallam-u</i>	تَكَلَّمَ / يَتَكَلَّمُ
to get, to receive	<i>tasallam-a/ya-tasallam-u</i>	تَسَلَّمَ / يَتَسَلَّمُ
to avoid	<i>tajannab-a/ya-tajannab-u</i>	تَجَنَّبَ / يَتَجَنَّبُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form V

Geminate roots in Form V have the following stem patterns: $taC_1aC_2C_2aC_2-$ in the past tense and $yataC_1aC_2C_2aC_2-$ in the present. For example;

to hesitate	<i>taraddad-a/ya-taraddad-u</i>	تَرَدَّدَ / يَتَرَدَّدُ
to feel (s.th.); handle, touch (s.th.)	<i>taHassas-a/ya-taHassas-u</i>	تَحَسَّسَ / يَتَحَسَّسُ

4 Hamzated roots in Form V

The *hamza* may occur in the first, second, or third position in the trilateral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the *hamza* may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense.

4.1 Initial *hamza*

In *hamza*-initial Form V verbs, the *hamza* sits on ^oalif in both tenses:

to be late	<i>ta^oaxxar-a/ya-ta^oaxxar-u</i>	تَأَخَّرَ / يَتَأَخَّرُ
to be affected (by)	<i>ta^oaththar-a/ya-ta^oaththar-u bi-</i>	تَأَثَّرَ / يَتَأَثَّرُ
to be sorry	<i>ta^oassaf-a/ya-ta^oassaf-u</i>	تَأَسَّفَ / يَتَأَسَّفُ

to be composed (of)	ta'allaf-a/ya-ta'allaf-u min	تَأَلَّفَ / يَتَأَلَّفُ مِنْ
to contemplate (s.th.)	ta'ammal-a/ya-ta'ammal-u	تَأَمَّلَ / يَتَأَمَّلُ

4.2 Medial *hamza*

to be at the head; to chair	tara'as-a/ ya-tara'as-u	تَرَأَسَ / يَتَرَأَسُ
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4.3 Final *hamza*

to get prepared	tahayya'a/ya-tahayya'a-u	تَهَيَّأَ / يَتَهَيَّأُ
to predict, forecast	tanabba'a/ya-tanabba'a-u	تَنَبَّأَ / يَتَنَبَّأُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form V

Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either *waaw* or *yaa'*, are inflected as sound roots in Form V; the *waaw* or *yaa'* remain in both tenses.

to be extended, spread out	tawassa'a/ya-tawassa'a-u	تَوَسَّعَ / يَتَوَسَّعُ
to be abundant, plentiful	tawaffar-a/ya-tawaffar-u	تَوَفَّرَ / يَتَوَفَّرُ
to expect, anticipate	tawaqqa'a/ya-tawaqqa'a-u	تَوَقَّعَ / يَتَوَقَّعُ
to stop; stand still	tawaqqaf-a/ya-tawaqqaf-u	تَوَقَّفَ / يَتَوَقَّفُ

6 Hollow roots in Form V

Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form V, the *waaw* or *yaa'* that is the second radical functions as a normal consonant, with *shadda*.

to change (intr.)	taghayyar-a/ya-taghayyar-u	تَغَيَّرَ / يَتَغَيَّرُ
to volunteer	taTawwa'a/ya-taTawwa'a-u	تَطَوَّعَ / يَتَطَوَّعُ

7 Defective roots in Form V: *tafa'aa* تَفَعَّى / *ya-tafa'aa* يَتَفَعَّى

Defective roots, where the final radical is either *waaw* or *yaa'*, behave as -aa/-aa verbs in Form V.⁵

to receive, accept	talaqqaa/ya-talaqqaa	تَلَقَّى / يَتَلَقَّى
to wish	tamannaa/ya-tamannaa	تَمَنَّى / يَتَمَنَّى
to trespass, to transcend	ta'addaa/ya-ta'addaa	تَعَدَّى / يَتَعَدَّى
to challenge	taHaddaa/ya-taHaddaa	تَحَدَّى / يَتَحَدَّى

⁵ They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently /a/ in the past tense and also /a/ in the present tense.

8 Doubly weak roots in Form V

These roots have two forms of weakness which may occur at any point in the root. For example:

8.1 Assimilated and defective

to take charge of ; be entrusted with	tawallaa/ya-tawallaa (root: w-l-y)	تَوَلَّى / يَتَوَلَّى
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9 Examples of Form V verbs in context

تَبَنَّى العراق استراتيجية عسكرية جديدة.
tabannaa l-ʿiraaq-u straatijyyat-an ʿaskariyyat-an jadiidat-an.
Iraq has adopted a new military strategy.

والرجل تصرف ببرودة.
wa-l-rajul-u taSarraf-a bi-buruudat-in.
(And) the man behaved coldly.

تَحَوَّل من سيء إلى أسوأ.
ta-taHawwal-u min sayyiʿ-in
ʿilaa ʿaswaʿ-a.

It changes from bad to worse.

سَيَتَوَلَّى منصبه غداً.
sa-ya-tawallaa manSib-a-hu ghad-an.
He will assume his office tomorrow.

تَحَدَّث عن الاستشراق.
taHaddath-a ʿan-i l-istishraaq-i.
He spoke of orientalism.

نَتَمَنَّى لكم عيداً مباركاً.
na-tamannaa la-kum ʿiid-an
mubaarak-an.

We wish you a blessed holiday.

سَوْفَ يَتَحَسَّنُ.
sawfa ya-taHassan-u.
It will get better.

10 Form V verbal nouns: *tafaʿul* تفعلُّ

10.1 Sound roots

Form V verbal nouns of regular or sound verbs have the pattern $taC_1aC_2C_2uC_3$.

breathing	tanaffus	تَنَفَّسَ	progress	taqaddum	تَقَدَّمَ
avoidance	tajannub	تَجَنَّبَ	interference	tadaxxul	تَدَخَّلَ

10.2 Geminate roots

hesitation	taraddud	تَرَدَّدَ	feeling, touching	taHassus	تَحَسَّسَ
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10.3 Hamzated roots

The placement of *hamza* on a particular seat is determined by contiguous vowels.

lateness	taʿaxxur	تَأَخَّرَ	prediction	tanabbuʿ	تَنَبَّأَ
being affected	taʿaththur	تَأَثَّرَ	chairmanship	taraʿus	تَرَوَّسَ

10.4 Assimilated roots

being extended, spreading out	tawassu ^c	تَوَسَّعَ	penetration, absorption	tawaghghul	تَوَغَّلَ
abundance, availability	tawaffur	تَوَفَّرَ	tension	tawattur	تَوَتَّرَ

10.5 Hollow roots

change	taghayyur	تَغَيَّرَ	development	taTawwur	تَطَوَّرَ
volunteering	taTawwu ^c	تَطَوَّعَ	pollution	talawwuth	تَلَوَّثَ

10.6 Defective roots: *tafa^cin* تَفَعَّلَ

The verbal nouns of defective verbs in Form V inflect as defective nouns (declension six in this book).

accepting	talaqqin	تَلَقَّ	wishing	tamannin	تَمَنَّى
transcending, overtaking	ta ^c addin	تَعَدَّ	challenge	taHaddin	تَحَدَّى

10.7 Examples of Form V verbal nouns in context

يعاني من التمزُّق. yu- ^c aanii min-a l-tamazzuq-i. It suffers from fragmentation.	منذ تسلَّمه الرئاسة mundhu tasallum-i-hi l-ri'aasat-a since his assumption of the presidency
حالة التأهَّب Haalat-u l-ta'ahhub-i state of alert	عدم التدخُّل ^c adam-u l-tadaxxul-i non-interference

11 Form V participles

The great majority of Form V participles occur as active participles. The Form V AP may have active, passive, or reflexive meaning. Few occur as passive participles.

11.1 Form V active participle (AP): *mutafa^cil* مُتَفَعِّلٌ

The Form V active participle may have an active meaning but it may also have a passive or reflexive sense because of the reflexive or resultative meaning of many verbs of this form.

11.1.1 Strong/regular root

spokesperson	mutakallim	مُتَكَلِّمٌ	frozen	mutajammid	مُتَجَمِّدٌ
extremist	mutaTarrif	مُتَطَرِّفٌ	married	mutazawwij	مُتَزَوِّجٌ

11.1.2 Geminate root

specialist	<i>mutaxaSSiS</i>	مُتَخَصِّصٌ	renewed	<i>mutajaddid</i>	مُتَجَدِّدٌ
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11.2.3 Hamzated root

sorry, regretful	<i>muta'assif</i>	مُتَأَسِّفٌ	late	<i>muta'axxir</i>	مُتَأَخِّرٌ
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11.2.4 Assimilated root

abundant	<i>mutawaffir</i>	مُتَوَفِّرٌ	middle	<i>mutawassiT</i>	مُتَوَسِّطٌ
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11.2.5 Hollow root

volunteer	<i>mutaTawwi^c</i>	مُتَطَوِّعٌ
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11.2.6 Defective root: *mutafa^cin* مُتَفَعِّعٌ

These participles inflect as defective nouns (declension six).

challenger; challenging	<i>mutaHaddin</i>	مُتَحَدِّدٌ	wishing	<i>mutamannin</i>	مُتَمَنِّنٌ
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11.2 Form V passive participle (PP): *mutafa^cal* مُتَفَعَّلٌ

Occurrences of these are few due to the passive-like or reflexive meaning of the many Form V verbs. A few examples include:

forced, feigned	<i>mutakallaf</i>	مُتَكَالَّفٌ
requirement/s	<i>mutaTallab/aat</i>	مُتَطَلَّبٌ / ات
expected	<i>mutawaqqa^c</i>	مُتَوَقَّعٌ

11.3 Form V participles in context

11.3.1 Active participle

المحيط المتجمد الشمالي <i>al-muHiiT-u l-mutajammid-u</i> <i>l-shimaaliyy-u</i> the Arctic Ocean (the 'frozen northern' ocean)	البحر الأبيض المتوسط <i>al-baHr-u l-'abyaD-u l-mutawassiT-u</i> the Mediterranean Sea ('the middle white sea')
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يغادر القاهرة اليوم متوجّهاً إلى باريس.

yu-ghaadir-u l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a mutawajjih-an 'ilaa baariis.

He leaves Cairo today heading for Paris.

11.3.2 Passive participle

من المتوقع أن...

min-a l-mutawaqqa^{c-i} ʔan . . .

it is expected that

Form V Sound root: ^{ك ت م} يتكلم ، تكلم ، يتكلم AP: ^{ك ت م} متكلم PP: ^{ك ت م} متكلم VN: ^{ك ت م} تكلم 'to speak'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	تَكَلَّمْتُ	أَتَكَلَّمُ	أَتَكَلَّمَ	أَتَكَلَّمْ		تَكَلَّمْتُ	تَكَلَّمْ
أنت	تَكَلَّمْتَ	تَتَكَلَّمُ	تَتَكَلَّمَ	تَتَكَلَّمْ	تَكَلَّمْ	تَكَلَّمْتَ	تَكَلَّمْ
أنت	تَكَلَّمْتَ	تَتَكَلَّمِينَ	تَتَكَلَّمِي	تَتَكَلَّمِي	تَكَلَّمِي	تَكَلَّمْتَ	تَتَكَلَّمِينَ
أنتما-m/f	تَكَلَّمْتُمَا	تَتَكَلَّمَانِ	تَتَكَلَّمَا	تَتَكَلَّمَا	تَكَلَّمَا	تَكَلَّمْتُمَا	تَتَكَلَّمَانِ
هو	تَكَلَّمَ	يَتَكَلَّمُ	يَتَكَلَّمَ	يَتَكَلَّمْ		تَكَلَّمَ	يَتَكَلَّمْ
هي	تَكَلَّمَتْ	تَتَكَلَّمُ	تَتَكَلَّمَ	تَتَكَلَّمْ		تَكَلَّمَتْ	تَتَكَلَّمْ
هما-m	تَكَلَّمَا	يَتَكَلَّمَانِ	يَتَكَلَّمَا	يَتَكَلَّمَا		تَكَلَّمَا	يَتَكَلَّمَانِ
هما-f	تَكَلَّمَتَا	تَتَكَلَّمَانِ	تَتَكَلَّمَا	تَتَكَلَّمَا		تَكَلَّمَتَا	تَتَكَلَّمَانِ
نحن	تَكَلَّمْنَا	نَتَكَلَّمُ	نَتَكَلَّمَ	نَتَكَلَّمْ		تَكَلَّمْنَا	نَتَكَلَّمْ
أنتم	تَكَلَّمْتُمْ	تَتَكَلَّمُونَ	تَتَكَلَّمُوا	تَتَكَلَّمُوا	تَكَلَّمُوا	تَكَلَّمْتُمْ	تَتَكَلَّمُونَ
أنتن	تَكَلَّمْتُنَّ	تَتَكَلَّمْنَ	تَتَكَلَّمْنَ	تَتَكَلَّمْنَ	تَكَلَّمْنَ	تَكَلَّمْتُنَّ	تَتَكَلَّمْنَ
هم	تَكَلَّمُوا	يَتَكَلَّمُونَ	يَتَكَلَّمُوا	يَتَكَلَّمُوا		تَكَلَّمُوا	يَتَكَلَّمُونَ
هن	تَكَلَّمْنَ	يَتَكَلَّمْنَ	يَتَكَلَّمْنَ	يَتَكَلَّمْنَ		تَكَلَّمْنَ	يَتَكَلَّمْنَ

Form V Geminate root: ^{تردد} تردد ، ^{يتردد} يتردد AP: ^{متردد} متردد PP: VN: ^{تردد} تردد 'to hesitate'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	ترددتُ	أترددُ	أترددَ	أترددْ			
أنت	ترددتَ	تترددُ	تترددَ	تترددْ	ترددْ		
أنتِ	ترددتِ	تترددينَ	تترددِي	تترددِي	ترددِي		
أنتما-m/f	ترددتما	تترددانِ	تترددا	تترددا	ترددا		
هو	ترددَ	يترددُ	يترددَ	يترددْ			
هي	ترددتْ	تترددُ	تترددَ	تترددْ			
هما-m	ترددا	يترددانِ	يترددا	يترددا			
هما-f	ترددتا	تترددانِ	تترددا	تترددا			
نحن	ترددنا	نترددُ	نترددَ	نترددْ			
أنتم	ترددتم	تترددونَ	تترددوا	تترددوا	ترددوا		
أنتن	ترددتنَ	تترددنَ	تترددنَ	تترددنَ	ترددنَ		
هم	ترددوا	يترددونَ	يترددوا	يترددوا			
هن	ترددنَ	يترددنَ	يترددنَ	يترددنَ			

Form V hamza-initial root: يَتَأَخَّرُ، تَأَخَّرَ AP: مَتَأَخَّرَ PP: VN: تَأَخَّرَ 'to be late, delayed'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	تَأَخَّرْتُ	أَتَأَخَّرُ	أَتَأَخَّرَ	أَتَأَخَّرْ			
أنت	تَأَخَّرْتَ	تَتَأَخَّرُ	تَتَأَخَّرَ	تَتَأَخَّرْ	تَأَخَّرْ		
أنت	تَأَخَّرْتَ	تَتَأَخَّرِينَ	تَتَأَخَّرِي	تَتَأَخَّرِي	تَأَخَّرِي		
أنتما-m/f	تَأَخَّرْتُمَا	تَتَأَخَّرَانِ	تَتَأَخَّرَا	تَتَأَخَّرَا	تَأَخَّرَا		
هو	تَأَخَّرَ	يَتَأَخَّرُ	يَتَأَخَّرَ	يَتَأَخَّرْ			
هي	تَأَخَّرَتْ	تَتَأَخَّرُ	تَتَأَخَّرَ	تَتَأَخَّرْ			
هما-m	تَأَخَّرَا	يَتَأَخَّرَانِ	يَتَأَخَّرَا	يَتَأَخَّرَا			
هما-f	تَأَخَّرْتَا	تَتَأَخَّرَانِ	تَتَأَخَّرَا	تَتَأَخَّرَا			
نحن	تَأَخَّرْنَا	نَتَأَخَّرُ	نَتَأَخَّرَ	نَتَأَخَّرْ			
أنتم	تَأَخَّرْتُمْ	تَتَأَخَّرُونَ	تَتَأَخَّرُوا	تَتَأَخَّرُوا	تَأَخَّرُوا		
أنتن	تَأَخَّرْتُنَّ	تَتَأَخَّرْنَ	تَتَأَخَّرْنَ	تَتَأَخَّرْنَ	تَأَخَّرْنَ		
هم	تَأَخَّرُوا	يَتَأَخَّرُونَ	يَتَأَخَّرُوا	يَتَأَخَّرُوا			
هن	تَأَخَّرْنَ	يَتَأَخَّرْنَ	يَتَأَخَّرْنَ	يَتَأَخَّرْنَ			

Form V hamza-final root: تَنَبَّأَ، يَتَنَبَّأُ AP: مَتَنَبَّأَ PP: مَتَنَبَّأَ VN: تَنَبَّأُ 'to predict'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	تَنَبَّأْتُ	أَتَنَبَّأُ	أَتَنَبَّأَ	أَتَنَبَّأْ		تَنَبَّئْتُ	تَتَنَبَّأْ
أَنْتَ	تَنَبَّأْتَ	تَتَنَبَّأُ	تَتَنَبَّأَ	تَتَنَبَّأْ	تَنَبَّأْ	تَنَبَّئْتَ	تَتَنَبَّأْ
أَنْتِ	تَنَبَّأْتِ	تَتَنَبَّئِينَ	تَتَنَبَّئِي	تَتَنَبَّئِي	تَنَبَّئِي	تَنَبَّئْتِ	تَتَنَبَّأِي
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	تَنَبَّأْتُمَا	تَتَنَبَّأَانِ	تَتَنَبَّأَا	تَتَنَبَّأَا	تَنَبَّأَا	تَنَبَّئْتُمَا	تَتَنَبَّأَا
هُوَ	تَنَبَّأَ	يَتَنَبَّأُ	يَتَنَبَّأَ	يَتَنَبَّأْ		تَنَبَّئِيَ	يَتَنَبَّأْ
هِيَ	تَنَبَّأَتْ	تَتَنَبَّأُ	تَتَنَبَّأَ	تَتَنَبَّأْ		تَنَبَّئَتْ	تَتَنَبَّأْ
هُمَا-m	تَنَبَّأَا	يَتَنَبَّأَانِ	يَتَنَبَّأَا	يَتَنَبَّأَا		تَنَبَّأَا	يَتَنَبَّأَانِ
هُمَا-f	تَنَبَّأَتَا	تَتَنَبَّأَانِ	تَتَنَبَّأَا	تَتَنَبَّأَا		تَنَبَّئَتَا	تَتَنَبَّأَانِ
نَحْنُ	تَنَبَّأْنَا	تَتَنَبَّأُ	تَتَنَبَّأَا	تَتَنَبَّأَا		تَنَبَّئْنَا	تَتَنَبَّأَا
أَنْتُمْ	تَنَبَّأْتُمْ	تَتَنَبَّوْنَ	تَتَنَبَّوْا	تَتَنَبَّوْا	تَنَبَّوْا	تَنَبَّئْتُمْ	تَتَنَبَّوْا
أَنْتِنَّ	تَنَبَّأْتِنَّ	تَتَنَبَّأَانِ	تَتَنَبَّأَا	تَتَنَبَّأَا	تَنَبَّأَانِ	تَنَبَّئْتِنَّ	تَتَنَبَّأَانِ
هُمْ	تَنَبَّأُوا	يَتَنَبَّوْنَ	يَتَنَبَّوْا	يَتَنَبَّوْا		تَنَبَّأُوا	يَتَنَبَّوْنَ
هِنَّ	تَنَبَّأْنَ	يَتَنَبَّأَانِ	يَتَنَبَّأَانِ	يَتَنَبَّأَانِ		تَنَبَّئْنَ	يَتَنَبَّأَانِ

Form V Hollow root: ^{طَوَّعَ} , ^{يَطْوَعُ} AP: ^{مَطْوَعٌ} PP: VN: ^{طَوَّعَ} 'to volunteer'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	طَوَّعْتُ	أَطْوَعُ	أُطْوَعِ	أُطْوَعْ			
أنت	طَوَّعْتَ	تَطْوَعُ	تُطْوَعِ	تُطْوَعْ	طَوَّعْ		
أنت	طَوَّعْتَ	تَطْوَعِينَ	تُطْوَعِي	تُطْوَعِي	طَوَّعِي		
أنتما-m/f	طَوَّعْتُمَا	تَطْوَعَانِ	تُطْوَعَا	تُطْوَعَا	طَوَّعَا		
هو	طَوَّعَ	يَطْوَعُ	يُطْوَعِ	يُطْوَعْ			
هي	طَوَّعَتْ	تَطْوَعُ	تُطْوَعِ	تُطْوَعِ			
هما-m	طَوَّعَا	يَطْوَعَانِ	يُطْوَعَا	يُطْوَعَا			
هما-f	طَوَّعَتَا	تَطْوَعَانِ	تُطْوَعَا	تُطْوَعَا			
نحن	طَوَّعْنَا	نَطْوَعُ	نُطْوَعِ	نُطْوَعْ			
أنتم	طَوَّعْتُمْ	تَطْوَعُونَ	تُطْوَعُوا	تُطْوَعُوا	طَوَّعُوا		
أنتن	طَوَّعْتُنَّ	تَطْوَعْنَ	تُطْوَعْنَ	تُطْوَعْنَ	طَوَّعْنَ		
هم	طَوَّعُوا	يَطْوَعُونَ	يُطْوَعُوا	يُطْوَعُوا			
هن	طَوَّعْنَ	يَطْوَعْنَ	يُطْوَعْنَ	يُطْوَعْنَ			

Form V Assimilated root: ^{تَوَقَّعَ} توقع ، ^{تَوَقَّعَ} يتوقع AP: ^{مَتَوَقَّعَ} متوقع PP: ^{مَتَوَقَّعَ} متوقع VN: ^{تَوَقَّعَ} توقع 'to expect'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	تَوَقَّعْتُ	أَتَوَقَّعُ	أَتَوَقَّعَ	أَتَوَقَّعْ		تَوَقَّعْتُ	تَتَوَقَّعُ
أنت	تَوَقَّعْتَ	تَتَوَقَّعُ	تَتَوَقَّعَ	تَتَوَقَّعْ	تَوَقَّعْ	تَوَقَّعْتَ	تَتَوَقَّعُ
أنت	تَوَقَّعْتَ	تَتَوَقَّعِينَ	تَتَوَقَّعِي	تَتَوَقَّعِي	تَوَقَّعِي	تَوَقَّعْتَ	تَتَوَقَّعِينَ
أنتما-m/f	تَوَقَّعْتُمَا	تَتَوَقَّعَانِ	تَتَوَقَّعَا	تَتَوَقَّعَا	تَوَقَّعَا	تَوَقَّعْتُمَا	تَتَوَقَّعَانِ
هو	تَوَقَّعَ	يَتَوَقَّعُ	يَتَوَقَّعَ	يَتَوَقَّعْ		تَوَقَّعَ	يَتَوَقَّعُ
هي	تَوَقَّعَتْ	تَتَوَقَّعُ	تَتَوَقَّعَ	تَتَوَقَّعْ		تَوَقَّعَتْ	تَتَوَقَّعُ
هما-m	تَوَقَّعَا	يَتَوَقَّعَانِ	يَتَوَقَّعَا	يَتَوَقَّعَا		تَوَقَّعَا	يَتَوَقَّعَانِ
هما-f	تَوَقَّعَتَا	تَتَوَقَّعَانِ	تَتَوَقَّعَا	تَتَوَقَّعَا		تَوَقَّعَتَا	تَتَوَقَّعَانِ
نحن	تَوَقَّعْنَا	نَتَوَقَّعُ	نَتَوَقَّعَ	نَتَوَقَّعْ			نَتَوَقَّعُ
أنتم	تَوَقَّعْتُمْ	تَتَوَقَّعُونَ	تَتَوَقَّعُوا	تَتَوَقَّعُوا	تَوَقَّعُوا	تَوَقَّعْتُمْ	تَتَوَقَّعُونَ
أنتن	تَوَقَّعْتُنَّ	تَتَوَقَّعْنَ	تَتَوَقَّعْنَ	تَتَوَقَّعْنَ	تَوَقَّعْنَ	تَوَقَّعْتُنَّ	تَتَوَقَّعْنَ
هم	تَوَقَّعُوا	يَتَوَقَّعُونَ	يَتَوَقَّعُوا	يَتَوَقَّعُوا		تَوَقَّعُوا	يَتَوَقَّعُونَ
هن	تَوَقَّعْنَ	يَتَوَقَّعْنَ	يَتَوَقَّعْنَ	يَتَوَقَّعْنَ		تَوَقَّعْنَ	يَتَوَقَّعْنَ

Form V Defective root: ^{تَحَدَّى} ، ^{تَحَدَّى} AP: ^{مَتَحَدَّ} PP: ^{مَتَحَدَّى} VN: ^{تَحَدَّ} 'to challenge'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	تَحَدَّيْتُ	أَتَحَدَّى	أَتَحَدَّى	أَتَحَدَّ		تَحَدِّتُ	تَحَدَّى
أَنْتَ	تَحَدَّيْتَ	تَتَحَدَّى	تَتَحَدَّى	تَتَحَدَّ	تَحَدَّ	تَحَدِّتَ	تَحَدَّى
أَنْتِ	تَحَدَّيْتِ	تَتَحَدِّينَ	تَتَحَدِّيْ	تَتَحَدِّيْ	تَحَدِّيْ	تَحَدِّتِ	تَتَحَدِّينَ
أَنْتُمْ-m/f	تَحَدَّيْتُمْ	تَتَحَدِّيانَ	تَتَحَدِّيَا	تَتَحَدِّيَا	تَحَدِّيَا	تَحَدِّتُمْ	تَتَحَدِّيانَ
هُوَ	تَحَدَّى	يَتَحَدَّى	يَتَحَدَّى	يَتَحَدَّ		تَحَدِّي	يَتَحَدَّى
هِيَ	تَحَدَّتْ	تَتَحَدَّى	تَتَحَدَّى	تَتَحَدَّ		تَحَدِّتْ	تَتَحَدَّى
هُمَا-m	تَحَدَّيا	يَتَحَدِّيانَ	يَتَحَدِّيَا	يَتَحَدِّيَا		تَحَدِّيا	يَتَحَدِّيانَ
هُمَا-f	تَحَدَّتَا	تَتَحَدِّيانَ	تَتَحَدِّيَا	تَتَحَدِّيَا		تَحَدِّتَا	تَتَحَدِّيانَ
نَحْنُ	تَحَدَّيْنَا	نَتَحَدَّى	نَتَحَدَّى	نَتَحَدَّ		تَحَدِّينَا	نَتَحَدَّى
أَنْتُمْ	تَحَدَّيْتُمْ	تَتَحَدُّونَ	تَتَحَدُّوا	تَتَحَدُّوا	تَحَدُّوا	تَحَدِّتُمْ	تَتَحَدُّونَ
أَنْتِ	تَحَدَّيْتِ	تَتَحَدِّينَ	تَتَحَدِّيْ	تَتَحَدِّيْ	تَحَدِّيْ	تَحَدِّتِ	تَتَحَدِّيْ
هُمْ	تَحَدُّوا	يَتَحَدُّونَ	يَتَحَدُّوا	يَتَحَدُّوا		تَحَدُّوا	يَتَحَدُّونَ
هِنَّ	تَحَدَّينَ	يَتَحَدِّينَ	يَتَحَدِّيْنَ	يَتَحَدِّيْنَ		تَحَدِّينَ	يَتَحَدِّيْنَ

Form VI triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *tafaaʿal-a* تَفَاعَلَ / *ya-tafaʿal-u* يَتَفَاعَلُ

Form VI verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that there is a prefixed /ta-/ and a long vowel /-aa-/ inserted after the first consonant of the triliteral root. It looks like a Form III verb with a /ta-/ prefix. In the present tense, the subject-marking prefix vowel is *fatHa* and the two stem vowels are *fatHa*. Form VI verbs thus have the stem patterns **taC₁aaC₂aC₃** in the past tense and **ya-taC₁aaC₂aC₃** in the present.

1.2 Meaning

In many cases Form VI is the **reciprocal** of the Form III verb, meaning that the action expressed in Form VI is mutual and happens to two (or more) parties (e.g., ‘to embrace one another’ *taʿaanaq-a* تَعَانَقَ / *ya-taʿaanaq-u* يَتَعَانَقُ).¹ Other meanings of this form of the verb include gradual, continuous movement or increase in a quality (e.g., ‘to diminish, grow smaller’ *taDaaʿal-a* تَضَاعَلَ / *ya-taDaaʿal-u* يَتَضَاعَلُ), and also pretending or feigning something (e.g., ‘to feign ignorance’ *tajaahal-a* تَجَاهَلَ / *ya-tajaahal-u* يَتَجَاهَلُ).

1.3 Transitivity

Form VI verbs are often reciprocal or intransitive, but sometimes they are transitive.

1.4 Inflection

The present tense subject-marker vowel is *fatHa* and both the past and present tense stem vowels are *fatHa* (e.g., *tabaadal-a* / *ya-tabaadal-u* ‘to exchange’).

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root

These verbs are examples of Form VI sound triliteral roots:

¹ See LeTourneau 1998 for discussion of Form VI reciprocity.

to retire, be pensioned	taqaa ^ˁ ad-a/ya-taqaa ^ˁ ad-u	تَقَاعَدَ / يَتَقَاعَدُ
to correlate (with)	taraafaq-a/ya-taraafaq-u (ma ^ˁ -a)	تَرَفَّقَ / يَتَرَفَّقُ (مع)
to understand each other	tafaaham-a/ya-tafaaham-u	تَفَاهَمَ / يَتَفَاهَمُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VI

Geminate roots in Form VI have the following stem patterns: **taC₁aaC₂C₂aC₂** in the past tense and **ya-taC₁aaC₂C₂aC₂** in the present. These are very rare. No examples occurred in the corpus.

4 Hamzated roots in Form VI

The *hamza* may occur in the first, second, or third position in the trilateral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the *hamza* may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense:

4.1 Initial *hamza*

When an initial root *hamza* meets the ^ˁ*alif* infix of Form VI, they are written together as ^ˁ*alif madda*:

to deliberate; to conspire	ta ^ˁ aamar-a/ya-ta ^ˁ aamar-u	تَأَمَّرَ / يَتَأَمَّرُ
to harmonize (with each other)	ta ^ˁ aallaf-a/ya-ta ^ˁ aallaf-u (ma ^ˁ -a)	تَأَلَّفَ / يَتَأَلَّفُ (مع)

4.2 Medial *hamza*

The medial *hamza* in Form VI sits aloof, after the long vowel ^ˁ*alif* in the past tense. In the present tense it also sits aloof after the ^ˁ*alif*.²

to be optimistic	tafaa ^ˁ al-a/ya-tafa ^ˁ al-u	تَفَاعَلَ / يَتَفَاعَلُ
to be pessimistic	tashaa ^ˁ am-a/ya-tashaa ^ˁ am-u	تَشَاءَمَ / يَتَشَاءَمُ
to be mended; be in harmony	talaa ^ˁ am-a/ya-talaa ^ˁ am-u	تَلَاءَمَ / يَتَلَاءَمُ
to diminish	taDaa ^ˁ al-a/ ya-taDaa ^ˁ al-u	تَضَاعَلَ / يَتَضَاعَلُ

4.3 Final *hamza*

Final *hamza* may sit on an ^ˁ*alif* seat in the past tense, but because it is the final consonant in the stem, the seat of *hamza* may shift with certain suffixes.

² This is because it is situated after a long vowel /aa/ and before a short vowel /a/. It would have an ^ˁ*alif* seat, but two ^ˁ*alifs* cannot follow each other in Arabic script, so it floats aloof.

be equal to; to
counterbalance

takaafa²-a/ya-takaafa²-u

تَكَافَأَ / يَتَكَافَأُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form VI

Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either *waaw* or *yaa²*, are inflected as sound roots in Form VI; the *waaw* or *yaa²* remains.

to coincide; agree with
each other

tawaafaq-a/ya-tawaafaq-u

تَوَافَقَ / يَتَوَافَقُ

to be in equilibrium

tawaazan-a/ya-tawaazan-u

تَوَازَنَ / يَتَوَازَنُ

6 Hollow roots in Form VI

Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form VI, the *waaw* or *yaa²* that is the second radical functions as a normal consonant.

to deliberate; consult
one another

tashaawar-a/ya-tashaawar-u

تَشَاوَرَ / يَتَشَاوَرُ

to cooperate with
one another

ta²aawan-a/ya-ta²aawan-u

تَعَاوَنَ / يَتَعَاوَنُ

to coexist

ta²aayash-a/ya-ta²aayash-u

تَعَايَشَ / يَتَعَايَشُ

to deal with; treat

tanaawal-a/ya-tanaawal-u

تَنَاولَ / يَتَنَاولُ

7 Defective roots in Form VI

Defective roots, where the final radical is either *waaw* or *yaa²*, behave as *-aa/-aa* verbs in Form VI. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently */a/* in the past tense and */a/* in the present tense.

to take, undertake, pursue
(a task)

ta²aaTaa/ya-ta²aaTaa

تَعَاطَى / يَتَعَاطَى

to meet each other, come
together

talaaqaa/ya-talaaqaa

تَلَاقَى / يَتَلَاقَى

to be equivalent to; be in
balance

tasaawaa/ya-tasaawaa

تَسَاوَى / يَتَسَاوَى

8 Examples of Form VI verbs in context

يتضاءل تدريجياً.

ya-taDaa²al-u tadriijiyy-an.

It diminishes gradually.

قد يتبادر إلى ذهنك.

qad ya-tabaaadar-u ²ilaa dhihn-i-ka.

It might cross your mind.

وترافق ذلك مع شكاوى من بعض الناخبين.

wa-taraafaq-a dhaalika ma^c-a shakaawaa min ba^cD-i l-naaxib-iina.

This correlated with complaints of some of the voters.

أَنَّ الإسلام يتساوى عندهم مع التطرّف..

'anna l-'islaam-a ya-tasaawaa 'ind-a-hum ma^c-a l-taTarruf-i . . .

that for them, Islam equates with extremism . . .

9 Form VI verbal noun: *tafaa^ul* تَفَاعُلٌ

The verbal noun from Form VI has the pattern CaCaaCuC:

9.1 Strong/regular root

embracing	<i>ta^caanuq</i>	تَعَانَقُ	partition	<i>taqaasum</i>	تَقَاسُمُ
retirement	<i>taqaa^cud</i>	تَقَاعَدُ	mutual understanding	<i>tafaahum</i>	تَفَاهُمُ

9.2 Geminate root

This is rare in Form VI.

9.3 Hamzated root

9.3.1 Hamza-initial

Here the root *hamza* combines with the infixed *'alif* of Form VI to result in *'alif madda*:

harmony; camaraderie	<i>ta[']aaluf</i>	تَأَلَّفُ	conspiracy	<i>ta[']aamur</i>	تَأَمَّرُ
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9.3.2 Hamza-medial

In these verbal nouns, the *hamza* sits on a *waaw* seat because it is followed by *Damma*.

optimism	<i>tafaa[']ul</i>	تَفَاوُلُ	pessimism	<i>tashaa[']um</i>	تَشَاوُمُ
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9.3.3 Hamza-final

In these verbal nouns, *hamza* sits on *waaw* because it is preceded by *Damma*:

equivalence, sameness	<i>takaafu[']</i>	تَكَافُؤُ
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9.4 Assimilated root

Assimilated roots preserve their initial root consonant and behave as regular roots in the Form VI verbal noun.

congruity; coinciding	<i>tawaafuq</i>	تَوَافُقُ
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9.5 Hollow root

The hollow roots behave as regular roots in the Form VI verbal noun.

cooperation	<i>ta°aawun</i>	تَعَاوُن	increase, increment	<i>tazaayud</i>	تَزَايُد
joint consultation	<i>tashaawur</i>	تَشَاوُر	alternation	<i>tanaawub</i>	تَنَاوُب

9.6 Defective root

In verbal nouns of defective Form VI verbs, the noun is defective:

meeting, encounter	<i>talaaq-in</i>	تَلَاقٍ	equivalence, sameness	<i>tasaaw-in</i>	تَسَاوٍ
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9.7 Examples of Form VI verbal nouns in context

الترابط بين قوّة النظام وشرعيّته

al-taraabuT-u bayn-a quwwat-i l-niZaam-i wa-shar°iyyat-i-hi

the interconnection between the power of the system and its legitimacy

قيام التسامح والتعايش السلمي بين الشعوب

qiyaam-u l-tasaamuH-i wa-l-ta°aayush-i l-silmiyy-i bayn-a l-shu°uub-i

establishing mutual tolerance and coexistence among peoples

قد يقود إلى تقاسم ثنائي.

qad ya-quud-u °ilaa taqaasum-in thunaa°iyy-in.

It might lead to a bilateral partition.

مجلس تعزيز التفاهم العربي البريطاني

majlis-u ta°ziiz-i l-tafaahum-i l-°arabiyy-i l-bariiTaaniyy-i

the council for strengthening Arab-British (mutual) understanding

بعد أن اتّهمهم بالتآمر مع الحكومة

ba°d-a °an-i ttaham-a-hum bi-l-ta°aamur-i ma°-a l-Hukuumat-i

after it accused them of conspiracy with the government

صدر الكتاب بالتعاون مع مجلس السفراء العرب.

Sadar-a l-kitaab-i bi-l-ta°aawun-i ma°-a majlis-i l-sufaraa°-i l-°arab-i.

The book was published with the cooperation of the council of Arab ambassadors.

10 Form VI participles

As with other participle forms, Form VI active and passive participles occur both as nouns and as adjectives. The active participle is much more frequent in occurrence.

10.1 Form VI active participle (AP): *mutafaa'il* مُتَفَاعِلٌ

10.1.1 sound/regular root

synonym	<i>mutaraadif</i>	مُتَرَادِفٌ	scattered	<i>mutanaathir</i>	مُتَنَاطِرٌ
retired	<i>mutaqaa'id</i>	مُتَقَاعِدٌ	mutual, reciprocal	<i>mutaDaamin</i>	مُتَضَامِنٌ

10.1.2 Geminate root

This is rare in Form VI.

10.1.3 Hamzated root

10.1.3.1 Hamza-INITIAL

harmonious	<i>muta'aalif</i>	مُتَأَلِفٌ	corroded	<i>muta'aakil</i>	مُتَأَكِّلٌ
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10.1.3.2 Hamza-MEDIAL

optimistic	<i>mutafaa'il</i>	مُتَفَائِلٌ	pessimistic	<i>mutashaa'im</i>	مُتَشَائِمٌ
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10.1.3.3 Hamza-FINAL

commensurate, alike	<i>mutakaafi'</i>	مُتَكَافِئٌ
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10.1.4 Assimilated root

balanced	<i>mutawaazin</i>	مُتَوَازِنٌ	continuous	<i>mutawaaSil</i>	مُتَوَاصِلٌ
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10.1.5 Hollow root

increasing	<i>mutazaayid</i>	مُتَزَايِدٌ	alternating, rotating	<i>mutanaawib</i>	مُتَنَاطِبٌ
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10.1.6 Defective root

successive, following	<i>mutataalin</i>	مُتَتَالٍ
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10.1.7 Examples of Form VI APs in context

الاهتمام المتزايد بالإسلام
al-ihtimaam-u l-mutazaayid-u bi-l-'islaam-i
 the increasing interest in Islam

مباراة متكافئة
mubaaraat-un mutakaafi'at-un
 an equal match

في سنوات متتالية	علب متناثرة
<i>fii sanawaat-in mutataaliyat-in</i>	<i>‘ilab-un mutanaathirat-un</i>
in successive years	scattered containers

10.2 Form VI passive participle (PP): *mutafaa‘al* متفاعل

This participle form is not frequent in MSA, but a few examples are provided here.

10.2.1 Sound/regular root

mutual, reciprocal	<i>mutabaadal</i>	مُتَبَادَل
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10.2.2 Hollow root

prevailing, current	<i>mutadaawal</i>	مُتَدَاوَل	availability; reach; available	<i>mutanaaawal</i>	مُتَنَاوَل
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10.2.3 Examples of Form VI PPs in context

بالمعنى المتداول	الاحترام المتبادل
<i>bi-l-ma‘naa l-mutadaawal-i</i>	<i>al-iHtiraam-u l-mutabaadal-u</i>
in the current meaning	mutual respect

Form VI Sound root: ^٢تَقَاعَدَ / ^٢يَتَقَاعَدُ AP: ^٢مَتَقَاعَدَ PP: VN: ^٢تَقَاعَدَ 'to retire'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	تَقَاعَدْتُ	أَتَقَاعَدُ	أَتَقَاعَدَ	أَتَقَاعَدْ			
أَنْتَ	تَقَاعَدْتَ	تَتَقَاعَدُ	تَتَقَاعَدَ	تَتَقَاعَدْ	تَقَاعَدْ		
أَنْتِ	تَقَاعَدْتِ	تَتَقَاعَدِينَ	تَتَقَاعَدِي	تَتَقَاعَدِي	تَقَاعَدِي		
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	تَقَاعَدْتُمَا	تَتَقَاعَدَانِ	تَتَقَاعَدَا	تَتَقَاعَدَا	تَقَاعَدَا		
هُوَ	تَقَاعَدَ	يَتَقَاعَدُ	يَتَقَاعَدَ	يَتَقَاعَدْ			
هِيَ	تَقَاعَدَتْ	تَتَقَاعَدُ	تَتَقَاعَدَ	تَتَقَاعَدْ			
هُمَا—m	تَقَاعَدَا	يَتَقَاعَدَانِ	يَتَقَاعَدَا	يَتَقَاعَدَا			
هُمَا—f	تَقَاعَدَتَا	تَتَقَاعَدَانِ	تَتَقَاعَدَا	تَتَقَاعَدَا			
نَحْنُ	تَقَاعَدْنَا	نَتَقَاعَدُ	نَتَقَاعَدَ	نَتَقَاعَدْ			
أَنْتُمْ	تَقَاعَدْتُمْ	تَتَقَاعَدُونَ	تَتَقَاعَدُوا	تَتَقَاعَدُوا	تَقَاعَدُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	تَقَاعَدْتُنَّ	تَتَقَاعَدْنَ	تَتَقَاعَدْنَ	تَتَقَاعَدْنَ	تَقَاعَدْنَ		
هُمْ	تَقَاعَدُوا	يَتَقَاعَدُونَ	يَتَقَاعَدُوا	يَتَقَاعَدُوا			
هُنَّ	تَقَاعَدْنَ	يَتَقَاعَدْنَ	يَتَقَاعَدْنَ	يَتَقَاعَدْنَ			

Form VI hamza-initial root: تَامَرَ / يَتَامَرُ AP: مُتَامِرٌ PP: VN: تَامَرٌ 'to conspire'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	تَامَرْتُ	أَتَامَرُ	أَتَامَرَ	أَتَامَرْ			
أَنْتَ	تَامَرْتَ	تَتَامَرُ	تَتَامَرَ	تَتَامَرْ	تَامَرْ		
أَنْتِ	تَامَرْتِ	تَتَامَرِينَ	تَتَامَرِي	تَتَامَرِي	تَامَرِي		
أَنْتُمْ-m/f	تَامَرْتُمْ	تَتَامَرَانِ	تَتَامَرَا	تَتَامَرَا	تَامَرَا		
هُوَ	تَامَرَ	يَتَامَرُ	يَتَامَرَ	يَتَامَرْ			
هِيَ	تَامَرَتْ	تَتَامَرُ	تَتَامَرَ	تَتَامَرْ			
هُمَا-m	تَامَرَا	يَتَامَرَانِ	يَتَامَرَا	يَتَامَرَا			
هُمَا-f	تَامَرَتَا	تَتَامَرَانِ	تَتَامَرَا	تَتَامَرَا			
نَحْنُ	تَامَرْنَا	نَتَامَرُ	نَتَامَرَ	نَتَامَرْ			
أَنْتُمْ	تَامَرْتُمْ	تَتَامَرُونَ	تَتَامَرُوا	تَتَامَرُوا	تَامَرُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	تَامَرْتُنَّ	تَتَامَرْنَ	تَتَامَرْنَ	تَتَامَرْنَ	تَامَرْنَ		
هُمْ	تَامَرُوا	يَتَامَرُونَ	يَتَامَرُوا	يَتَامَرُوا			
هُنَّ	تَامَرْنَ	يَتَامَرْنَ	يَتَامَرْنَ	يَتَامَرْنَ			

Form VI hamza-medial root: *تَفَاعَلَ* / *يَتَفَاعَلُ* AP: *مُتَفَائِلٌ* PP: VN: *تَفَاوُلٌ* 'to be optimistic'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	تَفَاعَلْتُ	أَتَفَاعَلُ	أَتَفَاعَلَ	أَتَفَاعَلْ			
أَنْتَ	تَفَاعَلْتَ	تَتَفَاعَلُ	تَتَفَاعَلَ	تَتَفَاعَلْ	تَفَاعَلْ		
أَنْتِ	تَفَاعَلْتِ	تَتَفَاعَلِينَ	تَتَفَاعَلِي	تَتَفَاعَلِي	تَفَاعَلِي		
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	تَفَاعَلْتُمَا	تَتَفَاعَلَانِ	تَتَفَاعَلَا	تَتَفَاعَلَا	تَفَاعَلَا		
هُوَ	تَفَاعَلَ	يَتَفَاعَلُ	يَتَفَاعَلَ	يَتَفَاعَلْ			
هِيَ	تَفَاعَلَتْ	تَتَفَاعَلُ	تَتَفَاعَلَ	تَتَفَاعَلْ			
هُمَا—m	تَفَاعَلَا	يَتَفَاعَلَانِ	يَتَفَاعَلَا	يَتَفَاعَلَا			
هُمَا—f	تَفَاعَلَتَا	تَتَفَاعَلَانِ	تَتَفَاعَلَا	تَتَفَاعَلَا			
نَحْنُ	تَفَاعَلْنَا	نَتَفَاعَلُ	نَتَفَاعَلَ	نَتَفَاعَلْ			
أَنْتُمْ	تَفَاعَلْتُمْ	تَتَفَاعَلُونَ	تَتَفَاعَلُوا	تَتَفَاعَلُوا	تَفَاعَلُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	تَفَاعَلْتُنَّ	تَتَفَاعَلْنَ	تَتَفَاعَلْنَ	تَتَفَاعَلْنَ	تَفَاعَلْنَ		
هُمْ	تَفَاعَلُوا	يَتَفَاعَلُونَ	يَتَفَاعَلُوا	يَتَفَاعَلُوا			
هُنَّ	تَفَاعَلْنَ	يَتَفَاعَلْنَ	يَتَفَاعَلْنَ	يَتَفَاعَلْنَ			

Form VI hamza-final root: تَكَافَأَ ، يَتَكَافَأُ AP: مُتَكَافِئٌ PP: VN: تَكَافَوْا 'to be equal'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	تَكَافَأْتُ	أَتَكَافَأُ	أَتَكَافَأَ	أَتَكَافَأْ			
أَنْتَ	تَكَافَأْتَ	تَتَكَافَأُ	تَتَكَافَأَ	تَتَكَافَأْ	تَكَافَأْ		
أَنْتِ	تَكَافَأْتِ	تَتَكَافِئِينَ	تَتَكَافِئِي	تَتَكَافِئِي	تَكَافِئِي		
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	تَكَافَأْتُمَا	تَتَكَافِئَانِ	تَتَكَافِئَا	تَتَكَافِئَا	تَكَافِئَا		
هُوَ	تَكَافَأَ	يَتَكَافَأُ	يَتَكَافَأَ	يَتَكَافَأْ			
هِيَ	تَكَافَأَتْ	تَتَكَافَأُ	تَتَكَافَأَ	تَتَكَافَأْ			
هُمَا—m	تَكَافَأَا	يَتَكَافِئَانِ	يَتَكَافِئَا	يَتَكَافِئَا			
هُمَا—f	تَكَافَأَتَا	تَتَكَافِئَانِ	تَتَكَافِئَا	تَتَكَافِئَا			
نَحْنُ	تَكَافَأْنَا	نَتَكَافَأُ	نَتَكَافَأَ	نَتَكَافَأْ			
أَنْتُمْ	تَكَافَأْتُمْ	تَتَكَافِئُونَ	تَتَكَافِئُوا	تَتَكَافِئُوا	تَكَافِئُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	تَكَافَأْتُنَّ	تَتَكَافِئَانِ	تَتَكَافِئَانِ	تَتَكَافِئَانِ	تَكَافِئَانِ		
هُمْ	تَكَافَأُوا	يَتَكَافِئُونَ	يَتَكَافِئُوا	يَتَكَافِئُوا			
هُنَّ	تَكَافَأْنَ	يَتَكَافِئَانِ	يَتَكَافِئَانِ	يَتَكَافِئَانِ			

Form VI Defective root: يَدَاعَى ، تَدَاعَى AP: مُتَدَاعٍ PP: VN: تَدَاعَ 'to decline, subside'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	تَدَاعَيْتُ	أَتَدَاعَى	أَتَدَاعَى	أَتَدَاعَ			
أَنْتَ	تَدَاعَيْتَ	تَتَدَاعَى	تَتَدَاعَى	تَتَدَاعَ	تَدَاعَ		
أَنْتِ	تَدَاعَيْتِ	تَتَدَاعَيْنِ	تَتَدَاعَيْنِ	تَتَدَاعَيْنِ	تَدَاعَيْنِ		
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	تَدَاعَيْتُمَا	تَتَدَاعَيَانِ	تَتَدَاعَيَا	تَتَدَاعَيَا	تَدَاعَيَا		
هُوَ	تَدَاعَى	يَتَدَاعَى	يَتَدَاعَى	يَتَدَاعَ			
هِيَ	تَدَاعَتْ	تَتَدَاعَى	تَتَدَاعَى	تَتَدَاعَ			
هُمَا—m	تَدَاعَيَا	يَتَدَاعَيَانِ	يَتَدَاعَيَا	يَتَدَاعَيَا			
هُمَا—f	تَدَاعَتَا	تَتَدَاعَيَانِ	تَتَدَاعَيَا	تَتَدَاعَيَا			
نَحْنُ	تَدَاعَيْنَا	نَتَدَاعَى	نَتَدَاعَى	نَتَدَاعَ			
أَنْتُمْ	تَدَاعَيْتُمْ	تَتَدَاعَوْنَ	تَتَدَاعَوْا	تَتَدَاعَوْا	تَدَاعَوْا		
أَنْتُنَّ	تَدَاعَيْتُنَّ	تَتَدَاعَيْنِ	تَتَدَاعَيْنِ	تَتَدَاعَيْنِ	تَدَاعَيْنِ		
هُمْ	تَدَاعَوْا	يَتَدَاعَوْنَ	يَتَدَاعَوْا	يَتَدَاعَوْا			
هُنَّ	تَدَاعَيْنَ	يَتَدَاعَيْنِ	يَتَدَاعَيْنِ	يَتَدَاعَيْنِ			

Form VII triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *infa^cal-a* انْفَعَلَ / *ya-nfa^cil-u* يَنْفَعِلُ

Form VII verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that a prefix /n/ is added to the Form I stem. Form VII has the past tense stem **inC₁aC₂aC₃**- and the present tense stem **-nC₁aC₂iC₃**-. A prefixed elidable *hamza* with *kasra* is added to the past tense stem of Form VII; this *hamza* and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers. There is a restriction on the roots that can be used in Form VII: roots beginning with the consonants *hamza*, *waaw*, *yaa²*, *raa²*, *laam*, or *nuun* do not have a Form VII.¹ In these instances, either Form V or Form VIII is used instead.

1.2 Meaning

Form VII verbs may be reflexive, resultative, passive, or mediopassive in meaning. They may express the consequences of a Form I verb action and have been classified also as verbs that express ergative and “unaccusative” constructions in Arabic.² The Arabic term for referring to their meaning is *muTaawi^c* ‘obeying, corresponding with’ – that is, Form VII verbs show the result of Form I action, e.g., *fataH-tu l-baab-a fa-nfataH-a* ‘I opened (Form I) the door and it opened (Form VII).’³

1.3 Transitivity

Form VII verbs are intransitive.

1.4 Inflection

The prefixed *hamzat al-waSl* with *kasra* in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present

¹ The prefixed /n/ of Form VII is considered phonologically incompatible with these consonants. In addition, roots whose initial consonant is *miim* are relatively rare in Form VII in MSA.

² See Mahmoud 1991 for further discussion and definition of Arabic unaccusatives.

³ For more on *muTaawi^c* see Chapter 26 on Form V, note 4.

tense subject-marker prefix is *fatHa* and the stem vowel in the present tense is *kasra* (e.g., *inSaraḡ-a/ya-nSariḡ-u* ‘to leave, go out’).

2 Regular (sound) trilateral root

2.1 Intransitive

to explode	<i>infajar-a/ya-nfajir-u</i>	اَنْفَجَرَ / يَنْفَجِرُ
to be at ease, be happy ⁴	<i>inbasaT-a/ya-nbasiT-u</i>	اَنْبَسَطَ / يَنْبَسِطُ
to sink, decline	<i>inxafaD-a/ya-nxafiD-u</i>	اَنْخَفَضَ / يَنْخَفِضُ
to withdraw; be withdrawn	<i>insaHab-a/ya-nsaHib-u</i>	اَنْسَحَبَ / يَنْسَحِبُ

2.2 Passive/reflexive

Form VII is often the passive, resultative, or reflexive of Form I:

to be separated, divided	<i>inqasam-a/ya-nqasim-u</i>	اِنْقَسَمَ / يَنْقَسِمُ
to be cut off	<i>inqaTa^c-a/ya-nqaTi^c-u</i>	اِنْقَطَعَ / يَنْقَطِعُ
to be reflected	<i>in^cakas-a/ya-n^cakis-u</i>	اِنْعَكَسَ / يَنْعَكِسُ
to be held, convened	<i>in^caqad-a/ya-n^caqid-u</i>	اِنْعَقَدَ / يَنْعَقِدُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VII

Geminate roots in Form VII have the following stem patterns: *inC₁aC₂C₂* - in the past tense and *ya-nC₁aC₂C₂* - in the present.

to affiliate; join (with)	<i>inDamm-a/ya-nDamm-u</i> (^ʔ ilaa)	اِنْضَمَّ / يَنْضَمُّ
to disintegrate	<i>inHall-a/ya-nHall-u</i>	اِنْحَلَّ / يَنْحَلُّ
to split, crack	<i>inshaqq-a/ya-nshaqq-u</i>	اِنْشَقَّ / يَنْشَقُّ

4 Hamzated roots in Form VII

The *hamza* may occur in the second or third position of the trilateral root in Form VII, but not in root-initial position. Depending on its position and the surrounding vowels, the *hamza* may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense:

Medial hamza: rare

Final hamza:

to be extinguished	<i>inTafa^ʔ-a/ya-nTafi^ʔ-u</i>	اِنْطَفَأَ / يَنْطَفِئُ
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⁴ Also, ‘to be spread out;’ s.v. *basat-a* in Wehr 1979.

5 Assimilated roots in Form VII

These do not occur (see 1.1).

6 Hollow roots in Form VII *infaal-a* اِنْفَال / *ya-nfaal-u* يَنْفَال

Hollow roots in Form VII are inflected with *ʾalif* as the long vowel and *fatHa* as the short vowel in the present and in the past: inC₁aaC₃-a / ya-nC₁aaC₃-u.

to take sides, align	inHaaz-a/ya-nHaaz-u	اِنْحَاَزَ / يَنْحَازُ
to decline, collapse	inhaar-a/ya-nhaar-u	اِنْهَارَ / يَنْهَارُ

7 Defective roots in Form VII

Defective roots in Form VII inflect as -aa/-ii defectives.

to be necessary; ought to	inbaghaa/ya-nbaghii	اِنْبَغَى / يَنْبَغِي
to elapse; expire	inqaDaa/ya-nqaDii	اِنْقَضَى / يَنْقَضِي
to be folded; be absorbed ⁵	inTawaa/ya-nTawii	اِنْطَوَى / يَنْطَوِي

8 Examples of Form VII verbs in context

انفجر الوضع في الشوارع.
infajar-a l-waD^c-u fii l-shawaari^c-i.
The situation **exploded** in the streets.

اندمجت في حياتها الجديدة بسهولة.
indamaj-at fii Hayaat-i-haa l-jadiidat-i
bi-suhuulat-in.

She easily got involved in her new life.

انقطع التيار الكهربائي.
inqaTa^c-a l-tayyaar-u l-kahrabaa³iyy-u.
The electric current **was cut off**.

انخرطوا في جدل عنيف.
inxaraT-uu fii jadal-in ^caniif-in.
They **plunged** into violent debate.

9 Form VII verbal noun: *infi^caal* اِنْفِعال

9.1 Strong/regular root

reflection	in ^c ikaas	اِنْعِكَاس	coup d'état	inqilaab	اِنْقِلَاب
explosion	infijaar	اِنْفِجَار	isolation	in ^c izaal	اِنْعِزَال

9.2 Geminate root

The Form VII verbal noun of geminate roots has the regular pattern *infi^caal*, the *alif* coming between the identical second and third root consonants:

affiliating	inDimaam	اِنْضِمَام	disintegration	inHilaal	اِنْحِلَال
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⁵ Used with the preposition *ʿalaa*, *inTawaa* means 'to contain.'

9.3 Hamzated root

extinguishing inTifaa' اِنْتَفَاءٌ

9.4 Assimilated root

These do not occur.

9.5 Hollow root: *infiyaa'* اِنْفِيَالٌ

The verbal noun for Form VII hollow verbs has a *yaa'* as the medial consonant, no matter what the root of origin.

alignment inHiyaaz اِنْحِيَاظٌ collapse; decline inhiyaar اِنْهِيَارٌ

9.6 Defective root: *infi'aa'* اِنْفَعَاءٌ

The verbal noun of defective Form VII verbs is of the pattern *infi'aa'* اِنْفَعَاءٌ, with *hamza* after the long *-aa-*.⁶

expiration, elapsing inqiDaa' اِنْقِضَاءٌ introversion inTiwaa' اِنْطِواءٌ

9.7 Examples of Form VII verbal nouns in context

الانحلال السياسي
al-inHilaal-u l-siyaasiyy-u
political **disintegration**

بسبب انشغال المسؤولين
bi-sabab-i nshighaal-i l-mas'uul-iina
because of the **preoccupation** of the
officials

قبل انقضاء عام على ذلك
qabl-a nqiDaa'-i 'aam-in 'alaa dhaalika
before the **elapsing** of a year after that

هو انعكاس للواقع الاجتماعي.
huwa n'ikaas-un li-l-waaq'-i
l-ijtimaa' iyy-i.

It is a **reflection** of social reality.

10 Form VII participles

10.1 Form VII active participle (AP): *munfa' il* مُنْفَعِلٌ

10.1.1 Sound/regular root

isolated	<i>mun'azil</i>	مُنْعَزِلٌ	sloping	<i>munHadir</i>	مُنْحَدِرٌ
introverted; shrunk	<i>munkamish</i>	مُنْكَمِشٌ	sliding	<i>munzaliq</i>	مُنْزَلِقٌ

10.1.2 Geminate root: *munfa'c* مُنْفَعِّعٌ

The active and passive participles for geminate roots in Form VII have the same pattern; *munfa'c*. If the verb itself has a passive, reflexive, or intransitive meaning,

⁶ Because of the shift of the semi-consonant (*waaw* or *yaa'*) to *hamza*, this verbal noun winds up looking like the verbal noun for *hamza*-final roots.

the AP will carry that passive or reflexive meaning. It is therefore sometimes difficult to tell the Form VII AP and PP apart.

closely packed; *munDamm* مُنْضَمَّ separatist *munshaqq* مُنْشَقَّ
affiliated with

10.1.3 Hamzated root

extinguished *munTafiʿ* مُنْطَفِئ

10.1.4 Assimilated root

These do not occur.

10.1.5 Hollow root: *munfaal* مُنْفَال

The active and passive participles for hollow roots in Form VII have the same pattern; *munfaal*. If the verb itself has a passive, reflexive, or intransitive meaning, the AP will carry that passive or reflexive meaning. It is often difficult to distinguish between the Form VII AP and PP.

aligned *munHaaz* مُنْحَاز

10.1.6 Defective root

introverted *munTawin* مُنْطَوِي

10.2 Form VII passive participle (PP): *munfaʿal* مُنْفَعَل

These are not frequent in occurrence because of the intransitivity or reflexivity of the meaning of this form. Form VII PPs that do occur tend to be used as **nouns of place**.

10.2.1 Sound/regular root

slope, incline *munHadar* مُنْحَدَر starting point *munTalaq* مُنْطَلَق
lowland *munxafaD* مُنْخَفَض

10.2.2 Geminate root: *munfaʿc* مُنْفَعَّع

As noted in 10.1.2, the passive participle and active participle are indistinguishable in form.

10.2.3 Hamzated root

This does not occur.

10.2.4 Assimilated root

This does not occur.

10.2.5 Hollow root: *munfaal* مُنْفَالٌ

As noted in 10.1.5, the passive participles and active participles of hollow roots in this form are identical.

10.2.6 Defective root: *munfa'an* مُنْفَعِي

enclosed, folded in *munTawan* مُنْطَوِيٌّ

10.3 Examples of Form VII participles in context

الدول غير المنحازة

al-duwal-u ghayr-u l-munHaazat-i

non-aligned states

باب منزلق

baab-un munzaliq-un

a sliding door

تطوّق منحدراته الأشجار.

tu-Tawwiq-u munHadaraat-i-hi l-'ashjaar-u.

Trees encircle its slopes.

Form VII Sound root: نَبَسَطَ, نَبَسَطَ, نَبَسَطَ AP: نَبَسَطَ PP: VN: نَبَسَطَ 'to be glad, happy'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	نَبَسَطْتُ	نَبَسَطُ	نَبَسَطَ	نَبَسَطْ			
أنت	نَبَسَطْتَ	تَبَسَطُ	تَبَسَطَ	تَبَسَطْ	نَبَسَطْ		
أنت	نَبَسَطْتَ	تَبَسَطِينَ	تَبَسَطِي	تَبَسَطِي	نَبَسَطِي		
أنتما-m/f	نَبَسَطْتُمَا	تَبَسَطَانِ	تَبَسَطَا	تَبَسَطَا	نَبَسَطَا		
هو	نَبَسَطَ	يَبَسَطُ	يَبَسَطَ	يَبَسَطْ			
هي	نَبَسَطَتْ	تَبَسَطُ	تَبَسَطَ	تَبَسَطْ			
هما-m	نَبَسَطَا	يَبَسَطَانِ	يَبَسَطَا	يَبَسَطَا			
هما-f	نَبَسَطَتَا	تَبَسَطَانِ	تَبَسَطَا	تَبَسَطَا			
نحن	نَبَسَطْنَا	نَبَسَطُ	نَبَسَطَ	نَبَسَطْ			
أنتم	نَبَسَطْتُمْ	تَبَسَطُونَ	تَبَسَطُوا	تَبَسَطُوا	نَبَسَطُوا		
أنتن	نَبَسَطْتُنَّ	تَبَسَطْنَ	تَبَسَطْنَ	تَبَسَطْنَ	نَبَسَطْنَ		
هم	نَبَسَطُوا	يَبَسَطُونَ	يَبَسَطُوا	يَبَسَطُوا			
هن	نَبَسَطْنَ	يَبَسَطْنَ	يَبَسَطْنَ	يَبَسَطْنَ			

Form VII Geminate root: $\text{اَنْضَمَّ} / \text{اَنْضَم}$ AP: مَنْضَم PP: VN: اِنْضَمَّام 'to join with, affiliate with'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	اَنْضَمْتُ	اَنْضَمُّ	اَنْضَمَّ	اَنْضَمَّ			
أنت	اَنْضَمْتَ	تَنْضَمُّ	تَنْضَمَّ	تَنْضَمَّ	اَنْضَمَّ		
أنت	اَنْضَمْتَ	تَنْضَمِينَ	تَنْضَمِي	تَنْضَمِي	اَنْضَمِي		
أنتما-m/f	اَنْضَمْتُمَا	تَنْضَمَانِ	تَنْضَمَا	تَنْضَمَا	اَنْضَمَا		
هو	اَنْضَمَّ	يَنْضَمُّ	يَنْضَمَّ	يَنْضَمَّ			
هي	اَنْضَمَتْ	تَنْضَمُّ	تَنْضَمَّ	تَنْضَمَّ			
هما-m	اَنْضَمَّا	يَنْضَمَانِ	يَنْضَمَا	يَنْضَمَا			
هما-f	اَنْضَمْتَا	تَنْضَمَانِ	تَنْضَمَا	تَنْضَمَا			
نحن	اَنْضَمْنَا	نَنْضَمُّ	نَنْضَمَّ	نَنْضَمَّ			
أنتم	اَنْضَمْتُمْ	تَنْضَمُونَ	تَنْضَمُوا	تَنْضَمُوا	اَنْضَمُوا		
أنتن	اَنْضَمْتُنَّ	تَنْضَمِينَ	تَنْضَمْنَ	تَنْضَمْنَ	اَنْضَمْنَ		
هم	اَنْضَمُوا	يَنْضَمُونَ	يَنْضَمُوا	يَنْضَمُوا			
هن	اَنْضَمْنَ	يَنْضَمِينَ	يَنْضَمْنَ	يَنْضَمْنَ			

Form VII Hollow root: اِنْحَازَ / يَنْحَازُ AP: مُنْحَاز PP: VN: اِنْحِياز 'to take sides'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	اِنْحَزْتُ	اُنْحَازُ	اُنْحَازَ	اُنْحَزْ			
أَنْتَ	اِنْحَزْتَ	تَنْحَازُ	تَنْحَازَ	تَنْحَزْ	اِنْحَزْ		
أَنْتِ	اِنْحَزْتِ	تَنْحَازِينَ	تَنْحَازِي	تَنْحَازِي	اِنْحَازِي		
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	اِنْحَزْتُمَا	تَنْحَازَانِ	تَنْحَازَا	تَنْحَازَا	اِنْحَازَا		
هُوَ	اِنْحَازَ	يَنْحَازُ	يَنْحَازَ	يَنْحَزْ			
هِيَ	اِنْحَازَتْ	تَنْحَازُ	تَنْحَازَ	تَنْحَزْ			
هُمَا-m	اِنْحَازَا	يَنْحَازَانِ	يَنْحَازَا	يَنْحَازَا			
هُمَا-f	اِنْحَازَتَا	تَنْحَازَانِ	تَنْحَازَا	تَنْحَازَا			
نَحْنُ	اِنْحَزْنَا	نَنْحَازُ	نَنْحَازَ	نَنْحَزْ			
أَنْتُمْ	اِنْحَزْتُمْ	تَنْحَازُونَ	تَنْحَازُوا	تَنْحَازُوا	اِنْحَازُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	اِنْحَزْتُنَّ	تَنْحَازْنَ	تَنْحَازْنَ	تَنْحَازْنَ	اِنْحَازْنَ		
هُمْ	اِنْحَازُوا	يَنْحَازُونَ	يَنْحَازُوا	يَنْحَازُوا			
هُنَّ	اِنْحَازْنَ	يَنْحَازْنَ	يَنْحَازْنَ	يَنْحَازْنَ			

Form VII Defective root: $\text{انْقَضَى} / \text{يَنْقُضِي}$ AP: مُنْقُضٌ PP: VN: انْقِضَاءٌ 'to elapse, expire'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	انْقَضَيْتُ	أُنْقِضِي	أُنْقَضِي	أُنْقُضِ			
أنت	انْقَضَيْتَ	تَنْقُضِي	تَنْقَضِي	تَنْقُضِ	انْقُضِ		
أنت	انْقَضَيْتَ	تَنْقُضِينَ	تَنْقُضِي	تَنْقُضِي	انْقُضِي		
أنتما-m/f	انْقَضَيْتُمَا	تَنْقُضِيَانِ	تَنْقُضِيَا	تَنْقُضِيَا	انْقُضِيَا		
هو	انْقَضَى	يَنْقُضِي	يَنْقَضِي	يَنْقُضِ			
هي	انْقَضَتْ	تَنْقُضِي	تَنْقَضِي	تَنْقُضِ			
هما-m	انْقَضَا	يَنْقُضِيَانِ	يَنْقُضِيَا	يَنْقُضِيَا			
هما-f	انْقَضَتَا	تَنْقُضِيَانِ	تَنْقُضِيَا	تَنْقُضِيَا			
نحن	انْقَضَيْنَا	نَنْقُضِي	نَنْقَضِي	نَنْقُضِ			
أنتم	انْقَضَيْتُمْ	تَنْقُضُونَ	تَنْقُضُوا	تَنْقُضُوا	انْقُضُوا		
أنتن	انْقَضَيْتُنَّ	تَنْقُضِينَ	تَنْقُضِينَ	تَنْقُضِينَ	انْقُضِينَ		
هم	انْقَضَوْا	يَنْقُضُونَ	يَنْقُضُوا	يَنْقُضُوا			
هن	انْقَضَيْنَ	يَنْقُضِينَ	يَنْقُضِينَ	يَنْقُضِينَ			

Form VIII triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *iftaʿal-a* اِفْتَعَلَ / *ya-ftaʿil-u* يَفْتَعِلُ

Form VIII verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that an infix /t/ is added to the Form I stem after the first radical. Thus Form VIII has the past tense stem $iC_1taC_2aC_3$ - and the present tense stem $-C_1taC_2iC_3$ -. A prefixed elidable *hamza* with *kasra* is added to the past tense stem of Form VIII in order to make it pronounceable; this *hamza* and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers.

1.2 Meaning

Form VIII verbs may be reflexive or medio-passive in meaning, but they also express a wide range of meanings that are difficult to predict. They may express the consequences of a Form I verb action and are sometimes considered resultative (*muTaawiʿ* مطاوع), in the same way that Form VII verbs may be resultative of the action of a Form I verb. This is especially true for verb roots starting with the consonants *hamza*, *waaw*, *yaaʿ*, *raaʿ*, *laam* or *nuun*, because these roots do not occur in Form VII and often use Form VIII instead to express the resultative (e.g., Form I *rafaʿ-a/ya-rfaʿ-u* ‘to raise’ and Form VIII *irtafaʿ-a* اِرْتَفَعَ / *ya-rtafiʿ-u* يَرْتَفِعُ ‘to be raised, to rise’). Form VIII is distinguished from Form VII by the ability to have a reciprocal meaning, that is, the action takes place mutually among several entities, e.g., Form I *jamaʿ-a/ya-jmaʿ-u* ‘to collect, gather (s.th.)’ and Form VIII *ijtamaʿ-a* اجْتَمَعَ / *ya-jtamiʿ-u* يَجْتَمِعُ ‘to meet with each other; collect together.’¹

1.3 Transitivity

Form VIII verbs may be transitive or intransitive. Some are doubly transitive, such as *iʿtabar-a* اِعْتَبَرَ / *ya-ʿtabir-u* يَعْتَبِرُ ‘to consider (s.o.) (s.th.).’

¹ On this point see Fleisch 1979, II: 311.

1.4 Inflection

The prefixed *hamzat al-waSl* with *kasra* in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present tense subject-marker prefix is *fatHa* and the stem vowel in the present tense is *kasra* (e.g., *intaxab-a* اِنْتَخَبَ /*ya-ntaxib-u* يَنْتَخِبُ 'to elect').

1.5 Special phonological characteristics of Form VIII

The insertion of the extraneous consonant /t/ within the root sometimes affects the spelling and pronunciation of Form VIII verbs. Various forms of **assimilation** of the infixed *taa'* to the initial root consonant occur, and with assimilated verb roots the *taa'* itself assimilates the initial *waaw* or *yaa'* completely.

1.5.1 Progressive assimilation

In progressive assimilation, the *taa'* is influenced by the preceding sound in the word.

1.5.1.1 VELARIZATION: Where the initial root consonant is velarized (S, D, T, Z) and the infixed *taa'* acquires the velarization feature. This results in a spelling change from *taa'* to *Taa'*.

to crash (into); collide with	iSTadam-a/ya-STadim-u (bi-) (root: S-d-m)	اِصْطَدَمَ / يَصْطَدِمُ
to be disturbed, agitated	iDTarab-a/ya-DTarib-u (root: D-r-b)	اِضْطَرَبَ / يَضْطَرِبُ
to be aware; examine, look into	iTTala ^c -a/ya-TTali ^c -u (^c alaa) (root: T-l- ^c)	اِطَّلَعَ / يَطَّلِعُ (على)

1.5.1.2 VOICED ALVEOLARS: Where the initial root consonant is voiced and alveolar (*d* or *z*)

(1) **daal-initial root:** The *taa'* assimilates totally to the *daal*.

to be inserted; to assimilate	iddagham-a/ya-ddaghim-u (root: d-gh-m)	اِدْغَمَ / يَدْغِمُ
to allege, claim	idda ^c aa/ya-dda ^c ii (root: d- ^c -w)	اِدَّعَى / يَدَّعِي

(2) **zaay-initial root:** In the *zaay*-initial root, the infixed *taa'* partially assimilates to the /z/ sound by becoming a voiced dental stop (*daal*) instead of a voiceless dental stop (/t/). That is, instead of *ifta^cal-a* it becomes *ifda^cal-a*.

to flourish	izdahar-a/ya-zdahir-u (root: z-h-r)	إَزْدَهَرَ / يَزْدُهِرُ
to be crowded	izdaham-a/ya-zdahim-u (root: z-H-m)	إَزْدَحَمَ / يَزْدَحِمُ
to be doubled, be paired	izdawaj-a/ya-zdawij-u (root: z-w-j)	إَزْدَوَجَ / يَزْدَوِجُ
to increase	izdaad-a/ya-zdaad-u (root: z-w-d)	إَزْدَادَ / يَزْدَادُ

1.5.1.3 INTERDENTALS: Where the initial root consonant is interdental (*th*, *dh*, *Z*) The infixed *taa'* assimilates completely to the interdental root consonant.

(1) *thaa'*-initial root

to avenge, get revenge	iththa ^a -a/ya-ththa ^a -ir-u	إِثَّارَ / يَثَّارُ
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- (2) *dhaal*-initial root: In *dhaal*-initial roots, the *dhaal* and infixed *taa'* mutually influence one another, assimilating together as two *daals* (the *dhaal* loses its interdental quality, the *taa'* acquires voicing):

to amass, save	iddaxar-a/ya-ddaxir-u (root: dh-x-r)	أَدَخَرَ / يَدْخِرُ
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(3) *Zaa'*-initial root:

to be wronged, suffer injustice	iZZalam-a/ya-ZZalim-u (root: Z-l-m)	أَظْلَمَ / يَظْلِمُ
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1.5.2 Form VIII regressive assimilation

In regressive assimilation, the initial root consonant *waaw* or *yaa'* is affected by the infixed *taa'* and is assimilated into it. That is, for example, instead of the shape **iwtahad-a* (from the root w-H-d) the actual Form VIII verb is *ittahad-a*.

to be united	ittahad-a/ya-ttahid-u (root w-H-d)	اتَّحَدَ / يَتَّحِدُ
to expand	ittasa ^c -a/ya-ttasi ^c -u (root: w-s ^c)	اتَّسَعَ / يَتَّسِعُ
to face, take the direction of	ittajah-a/ya-ttajih-u (root: w-j-h)	اتَّجَهَ / يَتَّجِهُ
to accuse	ittaham-a/ya-ttahim-u (root w-h-m)	اتَّهَمَ / يَتَّهِمُ

2 Regular or sound roots

to celebrate, have a party	iHtafal-a/ya-Htafil-u	اِحْتَفَلَ / يَحْتَفِلُ
to respect	iHtaram-a/ya-Htarim-u	اِحْتَرَمَ / يَحْتَرِمُ
to earn	iktasab-a/ya-ktasib-u	اِكْتَسَبَ / يَكْتَسِبُ
to be different; to differ	ixtalaf-a/ya-xtalif-u	اِخْتَلَفَ / يَخْتَلِفُ

2.1 Initial-*nuun* roots

A number of intransitive Form VIII verbs are from roots whose initial consonant is /n/, since these do not assume Form VII.

to move, be transferred	intaqal-a/ya-ntaqil-u	اِنْتَقَلَ / يَنْتَقِلُ
to spread out	intashar-a/ya-ntashir-u	اِنْتَشَرَ / يَنْتَشِرُ
to elect	intaxab-a/ya-ntaxib-u	اِنْتَخَبَ / يَنْتَخِبُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VIII

to be interested, concerned (with)	ihtamm-a/ya-htamm-u (bi-)	اِهْتَمَّ / يَهْتَمُّ بَ
to be spread, extended	imtadd-a/ya-mtadd-u	اِمْتَدَّ / يَمْتَدُّ
to occupy	iHtall-a/ya-Htall-u	اِحْتَلَّ / يَحْتَلُّ

4 Hamzated roots in Form VIII

4.1 Hamza-initial

to deliberate; to plot	i ^ʔ tamar-a/ya- ^ʔ tamir-u	اِئْتَمَرَ / يَأْتَمِرُ
to go well together; form a coalition	i ^ʔ talaf-a/ya- ^ʔ talif-u	اِئْتَلَفَ / يَأْتَلِفُ

4.2 Hamza-medial

to be healed, to heal	ilta ^ʔ am-a/ya-lta ^ʔ im-u	اِلْتَامَ / يَلْتَمُّ
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4.3 Hamza-final

to begin	ibtada ^ʔ -a/ya-btadi ^ʔ -u	اِبْتَدَأَ / يَبْتَدِئُ
to be filled	imtala ^ʔ -a/ya-mtali ^ʔ -u	اِمْتَلَأَ / يَمْتَلِئُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form VIII

In Form VIII, the infixed *taa'* assimilates the initial semi-consonant *waaw* or *yaa'*, and doubles in strength (see above 1.5.2).

6 Hollow roots in Form VIII *iftaal-a* اِفْتَال / *ya-ftaal-u* يَفْتَال

Hollow roots in Form VIII are usually inflected with *'alif* as the long vowel and *fatHa* as the short vowel in the present and in the past *iC₁CaaC₃-a* / *ya-C₁CaaC₃-u*.

to need	<i>iHtaaj-a/ya-Htaaj-u</i>	اِحْتَاَجَ / يَحْتَاَجُ
to assassinate	<i>ightaal-a/ya-ghtaal-u</i>	اِغْتَالَ / يَغْتَالُ
to choose	<i>ixtaar-a/ya-xtaar-u</i>	اِخْتَارَ / يَخْتَارُ

6.1 Retention of medial semivowel

In some cases, a hollow root in Form VIII keeps its medial semi-consonant, as follows:

to be doubled, paired	<i>izdawaj-a/ya-zdawij-u</i>	اِزْدَوَجَ / يَزْدَوِجُ
to contain	<i>iHtawaa/ya-Htawii</i>	اِحْتَوَى / يَحْتَوِي

7 Defective roots in Form VIII

Defective roots in Form VIII inflect as *-aa/-ii* defectives:

to meet, encounter (s.o.)	<i>iltaqaa/ya-ltaqii</i>	اِلْتَقَى / يَلْتَقِي
to be content, satisfied	<i>iktafaa/ya-ktafii</i>	اِكْتَفَى / يَكْتَفِي
to wear, be dressed (in)	<i>irtadaa/ya-rtadii</i>	اِرْتَدَى / يَرْتَدِي

7.1 Hollow and defective

The hollow-defective Form VIII verb keeps its medial semi-consonant (usually *waaw*) as a strong consonant:

to contain (s.th.)	<i>iHtawaa/ya-Htawii</i>	اِحْتَوَى / يَحْتَوِي
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8 Examples of Form VIII verbs in context

واكتشف أيضاً أخطاءً

wa-ktashaf-a 'ayD-an 'axTaa'-an
and he also **discovered** mistakes

تجذب الطلاب الجيدين.

ta-jtadhib-u l-Tullaab-a l-jayyid-iina.
It **attracts** good students.

ما يحتوي هذا المتحف

maa ya-Htawii haadhaa l-matHaf-u
what this museum **contains**

يترك لكل إنسان أن يختار.

ya-truk-u li-kull-i insaan-in 'an ya-xtaar-a.
He **leaves** [it] to every person **to choose**.

9 Verbal nouns of Form VIII

9.1 Sound/regular root: *ifti'aa*/ اِفْتَعَالَ

respect	iHtiraam	اِحْتِرَام	meeting	ijtimaa'	اجْتِمَاع
election	intixaab	اِنْتِخَاب	difference	ixtilaaf	اِخْتِلَاف

9.1.1 With assimilation of *taa'*

collision, crash	iSTidaam	اِصْطِدَام	flourishing, bloom	izdihaar	ازْدِيْهَار
disturbance, unrest	iDTiraab	اِضْطِرَاب	crowd, jam, crush	izdiHaam	ازْدِيْحَام

9.2 Geminate root

interest, concern	ihtimaam	اِهْتِمَام	occupation	iHtilaal	اِحْتِلَال
spreading	imtidaad	اِمْتِدَاد	gratitude	imtinaan	اِمْتِنَان

9.3 Hamzated root

coalition	i'tilaaf	اِئْتِلَاف	beginning	ibtidaa'	اِبْتِدَاء
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9.4 Assimilated root

union	ittiHaad	اِتِّحَاد	accusation	ittihaam	اِتِّهَام
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9.5 Hollow root

reserve; precaution	iHtiyaaT	اِحْتِيَاط	increase	izdiyaad	ازْدِيَاد
pleasure, delight	irtiyyaaH	اِرْتِيَاح	doubling, pairing	izdiwaaq ²	ازْدَوَاج

9.6 Defective root

In the defective root Form VIII verbal noun, the final defective root consonant is represented by a *hamza*.

membership; belonging	intimaa'	اِنْتِمَاء	disappearance	ixtifaa'	اِخْتِفَاء
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² In this particular root, the *waaw* behaves as a strong consonant. See section 6 above.

9.7 Form VIII verbal nouns in context

عدم ارتياح الجانبين

‘adam-u rtiyaaH-i l-jaanib-ayni

the discomfort of both sides

اجتماع كبار المسؤولين

ijtimaa‘-u kibaar-i l-mas‘uul-iina

the meeting of senior officials

لا احترام للحقوق الشخصية للإنسان.

laa Htiraam-a li-l-Huquuq-i l-shaxSiyyat-i li-l-insaan-i.

There is no respect for the personal rights
of humans.

اكتشاف رسائل حب

iktishaaf-u rasaa‘il-i Hubb-in

the discovery of love letters

10 Form VIII participles

10.1 Form VIII active participle (AP): *mufta‘il* مُفْتَعِلْ

In addition to carrying the meaning of doer of the action, the AP of Form VIII may sometimes convey a passive or resultative meaning, especially when derived from a resultative verb, e.g., *muqtani‘* ‘convinced’ or *muttaHid* ‘united.’

10.1.1 Sound/regular root: *mufta‘il* مُفْتَعِلْ

respecting	muHtarim	مُحْتَرِمٌ	convinced	muqtani‘	مُقْتَنِعٌ
listener	mustami‘	مُسْتَمِعٌ	objecting	mu‘tariD	مُعْتَرِضٌ
different, differing	muxtaliF	مُخْتَلِفٌ	spreading	muntashir	مُنْتَشِرٌ

10.1.2 Geminate root: *mufta‘c* مُفْتَعٍ

Because of the sequence of identical second and third root consonants, the stem vowel *kasra* is deleted from this AP form. That is, instead of **mufta‘i‘*, the form is *mufta‘c*.³ As a result of the deletion of the stem vowel in this AP form, the AP and PP are identical.

occupying	muHtall	مُحْتَلٌّ	concerned (with)	muhtamm (bi-)	مُهْتَمٌّ بِـ
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10.1.3 Hamzated root

Hamza-final: *mufta‘i’* مُفْتَعِيْ

beginning	mubtadi‘	مُبْتَدِيْ	filled	mumtali‘	مُمْتَلِيْ
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³ This stems from phonological restrictions on identical consonants separated by a short vowel.

10.1.4 Assimilated root: *muttaʿil* مُتَعَلِّ

united	<i>muttaHid</i>	مُتَّحِد	facing	<i>muttajih</i>	مُتَّجِه
contacting	<i>muttaSil</i>	مُتَّصِل	accusing; accuser	<i>muttahim</i>	مُتَّهَم

10.1.5 Hollow root: *muftaal* مُفْتَال

relaxing; satisfied	<i>murtaaH</i>	مُرْتَّاح	double	<i>muzdawij</i> ⁴	مُزْدَوِج
accustomed (to); usual	<i>muʿtaad</i> (ʿalaa)	مُعْتَاد عَلٰى	needing	<i>muHtaaj</i>	مُحْتَاج

10.1.6 Defective root: *muftaʿin* مُفْتَعِن

belonging	<i>muntam-in</i>	مُنْتَمِ	containing	<i>muHtaw-in</i>	مُحْتَوٍ
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10.1.7 Form VIII APs in context

الولايات المتحدة <i>al-wilaayaat-u l-muttaHidat-u</i> the United States	الأمم المتحدة <i>al-ʿumam-u l-muttaHidat-u</i> the United Nations	مازق مزدوج <i>maaziq-un muzdawij-un</i> a double bind
في مكانه المعتاد <i>fii makaan-i-hi l-muʿtaad-i</i> in its usual place	باتوا مقتنعين. <i>baat-uu muqtaniʿ-iina.</i> They have become convinced.	

10.2 Form VIII passive participle (PP): *muftaʿal* مُفْتَعَل

In addition to acting as an adjective, in many cases the Form VIII passive participle acts as a noun of place, denoting the location where the Form VIII verbal activity takes place.

10.2.1 Strong/regular root: *muftaʿal* مُفْتَعَل

respected	<i>muHtaram</i>	مُحْتَرَم	shared, common	<i>mushtarak</i>	مُشْتَرَك
society	<i>mujtamaʿ</i>	مُجْتَمَع	document	<i>mustanad</i>	مُسْتَنْد
elected	<i>muntaxab</i>	مُنْتَخَب	informed	<i>muTTalaʿ</i>	مُطَّلَع

⁴ See note 2.

10.2.2 Geminate root: *mufta*^{cc} مُفْتَع

The AP and PP of geminate Form VIII verbs are identical. Context is often needed to differentiate the meaning.

occupied muHtall مُحْتَلٌّ

10.2.2 Hamzated root

Hamza- initial: *mu'ta*^aal مُؤْتَعَل

conference mu'tamar مُؤْتَمَرٌ

10.2.3 Assimilated root: *mutta*^aal مُتَّعَل

accused; suspected muttahaam مُتَّهَمٌ

10.2.4 Hollow root: *muftaal*

The AP and PP of hollow Form VIII verbs are identical. Context is needed to differentiate the meaning.

excellent, mumtaaz مُمْتَازٌ chosen muxtaar مُخْتَارٌ
distinguished

10.2.5 Defective root: *mufta*^aan مُفْتَعَى

required muqtaD-an مُقْتَدَى level mustaw-an مُسْتَوَى

10.2.6 Examples of Form VIII PPs in context

مصادر مطلعة

maSaadir-u muTTala't-un

informed sources

لديه المستندات الرسمية

laday-hi l-mustanadaat-u l-rasmiyyat-u.

He has the official documents.

بمقتضى الحقوق

bi-muqtaDaa l-Huquuq-i

in accordance with the laws

الرئيس المنتخب

al-ra'iis-u l-muntaxab-u

the president-elect

جدول أعمال مشترك

jadwal-u 'a'maal-in mushtarak-un

a shared agenda

في الأراضي المحتلة

fii l-'araaDii l-muHtallat-i

in the occupied territories

Form VIII Sound root: ^٢اَحْتَرَمَ، ^٢يَحْتَرِمُ AP: ^٢مَحْتَرِمٌ PP: ^٢مُحْتَرَمٌ VN: ^٢اِحْتِرَامٌ 'to respect'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَحْتَرَمْتُ	أَحْتَرِمُ	أَحْتَرِمَ	أَحْتَرِمْ		أُحْتَرِمْتُ	أُحْتَرِمُ
أَنْتَ	أَحْتَرَمْتَ	تَحْتَرِمُ	تَحْتَرِمَ	تَحْتَرِمْ	اِحْتَرِمْ	أُحْتَرِمْتَ	تُحْتَرِمُ
أَنْتِ	أَحْتَرَمْتِ	تَحْتَرِمِينَ	تَحْتَرِمِي	تَحْتَرِمِي	اِحْتَرِمِي	أُحْتَرِمْتِ	تُحْتَرِمِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	أَحْتَرَمْتُمَا	تَحْتَرِمَانِ	تَحْتَرِمَا	تَحْتَرِمَا	اِحْتَرِمَا	أُحْتَرِمْتُمَا	تُحْتَرِمَانِ
هُوَ	اِحْتَرَمَ	يَحْتَرِمُ	يَحْتَرِمَ	يَحْتَرِمْ		أُحْتَرِمَ	يُحْتَرِمُ
هِيَ	اِحْتَرَمَتْ	تَحْتَرِمُ	تَحْتَرِمَ	تَحْتَرِمْ		أُحْتَرِمَتْ	تُحْتَرِمُ
هُمَا-m	اِحْتَرَمَا	يَحْتَرِمَانِ	يَحْتَرِمَا	يَحْتَرِمَا		أُحْتَرِمَا	يُحْتَرِمَانِ
هُمَا-f	اِحْتَرَمْتَا	تَحْتَرِمَانِ	تَحْتَرِمَا	تَحْتَرِمَا		أُحْتَرِمْتَا	تُحْتَرِمَانِ
نَحْنُ	اِحْتَرَمْنَا	نَحْتَرِمُ	نَحْتَرِمَ	نَحْتَرِمْ		أُحْتَرِمْنَا	نُحْتَرِمُ
أَنْتُمْ	اِحْتَرَمْتُمْ	تَحْتَرِمُونَ	تَحْتَرِمُوا	تَحْتَرِمُوا	اِحْتَرِمُوا	أُحْتَرِمْتُمْ	تُحْتَرِمُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	اِحْتَرَمْتُنَّ	تَحْتَرِمْنَ	تَحْتَرِمْنَ	تَحْتَرِمْنَ	اِحْتَرِمْنَ	أُحْتَرِمْتُنَّ	تُحْتَرِمْنَ
هُمْ	اِحْتَرَمُوا	يَحْتَرِمُونَ	يَحْتَرِمُوا	يَحْتَرِمُوا		أُحْتَرِمُوا	يُحْتَرِمُونَ
هُنَّ	اِحْتَرَمْنَ	يَحْتَرِمْنَ	يَحْتَرِمْنَ	يَحْتَرِمْنَ		أُحْتَرِمْنَ	يُحْتَرِمْنَ

Form VIII Geminate root: أَحْتَلَّ , يَحْتَلُّ AP: مَحْتَلٌّ PP: مَحْتَلٌّ VN: أَحْتِلَالٌ 'to occupy'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَحْتَلَلْتُ	أَحْتَلُّ	أَحْتَلَّ	أَحْتَلِّ or أَحْتَلَّ		أُحْتَلِّتُ	أُحْتَلُّ
أَنْتَ	أَحْتَلَلْتَ	تَحْتَلُّ	تَحْتَلَّ	تَحْتَلِّ or تَحْتَلَّ	أَحْتَلِّ or أَحْتَلَّ	أُحْتَلِّتَ	تُحْتَلُّ
أَنْتِ	أَحْتَلَلْتِ	تَحْتَلِينَ	تَحْتَلِيْ	تَحْتَلِيْ	أَحْتَلِيْ	أُحْتَلِّتِ	تُحْتَلِينَ
أَنْتُمَا -m/f	أَحْتَلَلْتُمَا	تَحْتَلَانِ	تَحْتَلَاْ	تَحْتَلَاْ	أَحْتَلَاْ	أُحْتَلِّتُمَا	تُحْتَلَانِ
هُوَ	أَحْتَلَّ	يَحْتَلُّ	يَحْتَلَّ	يَحْتَلِّ or يَحْتَلَّ		يُحْتَلِّتُ	يُحْتَلُّ
هِيَ	أَحْتَلَّتْ	تَحْتَلُّ	تَحْتَلَّ	تَحْتَلِّ or تَحْتَلَّ		يُحْتَلِّتُ	تُحْتَلُّ
هُمَا -m	أَحْتَلَاْ	يَحْتَلَانِ	يَحْتَلَاْ	يَحْتَلَاْ		يُحْتَلِّتُ	يُحْتَلَانِ
هُمَا -f	أَحْتَلَّتَاْ	تَحْتَلَانِ	تَحْتَلَاْ	تَحْتَلَاْ		يُحْتَلِّتُ	تُحْتَلَانِ
نَحْنُ	أَحْتَلَلْنَا	نَحْتَلُّ	نَحْتَلَّ	نَحْتَلِّ or نَحْتَلَّ		يُحْتَلِّتُ	نُحْتَلُّ
أَنْتُمْ	أَحْتَلَلْتُمْ	تَحْتَلُونَ	تَحْتَلُواْ	تَحْتَلُواْ	أَحْتَلُواْ	يُحْتَلِّتُ	تُحْتَلُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	أَحْتَلَلْتُنَّ	تَحْتَلْنَ	تَحْتَلْنَ	تَحْتَلْنَ	أَحْتَلْنَ	يُحْتَلِّتُ	تُحْتَلْنَ
هُمْ	أَحْتَلُواْ	يَحْتَلُونَ	يَحْتَلُواْ	يَحْتَلُواْ		يُحْتَلِّتُ	يُحْتَلُونَ
هُنَّ	أَحْتَلْنَ	يَحْتَلْنَ	يَحْتَلْنَ	يَحْتَلْنَ		يُحْتَلِّتُ	يُحْتَلْنَ

Form VIII hamza-final root: **اِبْتَدَأَ**، **يَبْتَدِي** AP: **مُبْتَدِي** PP: **مُبْتَدَأ** VN: **اِبْتِدَاء** 'to begin'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	اِبْتَدَأْتُ	اِبْتَدِي	اِبْتَدِي	اِبْتَدِي			
أَنْتَ	اِبْتَدَأْتَ	تَبْتَدِي	تَبْتَدِي	تَبْتَدِي	اِبْتَدِي		
أَنْتِ	اِبْتَدَأْتِ	تَبْتَدِينَ	تَبْتَدِي	تَبْتَدِي	اِبْتَدِي		
أَنْتُمْ-m/f	اِبْتَدَأْتُمْ	تَبْتَدُونَ	تَبْتَدُوا	تَبْتَدُوا	اِبْتَدُوا		
هُوَ	اِبْتَدَأَ	يَبْتَدِي	يَبْتَدِي	يَبْتَدِي			
هِيَ	اِبْتَدَأَتْ	تَبْتَدِي	تَبْتَدِي	تَبْتَدِي			
هُمَا-m	اِبْتَدَأَا	يَبْتَدِيَانِ	يَبْتَدُوا	يَبْتَدُوا			
هُمَا-f	اِبْتَدَأَتَا	تَبْتَدِيَانِ	تَبْتَدُوا	تَبْتَدُوا			
نَحْنُ	اِبْتَدَأْنَا	نَبْتَدِي	نَبْتَدِي	نَبْتَدِي			
أَنْتُمْ	اِبْتَدَأْتُمْ	تَبْتَدُونَ	تَبْتَدُوا	تَبْتَدُوا	اِبْتَدُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	اِبْتَدَأْتُنَّ	تَبْتَدِينَ	تَبْتَدِينَ	تَبْتَدِينَ	اِبْتَدِينَ		
هُمْ	اِبْتَدَؤُوا	يَبْتَدُونَ	يَبْتَدُوا	يَبْتَدُوا			
هُنَّ	اِبْتَدَأْنَ	يَبْتَدِينَ	يَبْتَدِينَ	يَبْتَدِينَ			

Form VIII Hollow root: اِخْتَارَ, يَخْتَارُ AP: مُخْتَارٌ PP: مُخْتَارٌ VN: اِخْتِيَارٌ 'to choose'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	اِخْتَرْتُ	أَخْتَارُ	أَخْتَارَ	أَخْتَرْ		أُخْتِرْتُ	أُخْتَارُ
أَنْتَ	اِخْتَرْتَ	تَخْتَارُ	تَخْتَارَ	تَخْتَرْ	اِخْتَرْ	أُخْتِرْتَ	تُخْتَارُ
أَنْتِ	اِخْتَرْتِ	تَخْتَارِينَ	تَخْتَارِي	تَخْتَارِي	اِخْتَارِي	أُخْتِرْتِ	تُخْتَارِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	اِخْتَرْتُمَا	تَخْتَارَانِ	تَخْتَارَا	تَخْتَارَا	اِخْتَارَا	أُخْتِرْتُمَا	تُخْتَارَانِ
هُوَ	اِخْتَارَ	يَخْتَارُ	يَخْتَارَ	يَخْتَرْ		أُخْتِرَ	يُخْتَارُ
هِيَ	اِخْتَارَتْ	تَخْتَارُ	تَخْتَارَ	تَخْتَرْ		أُخْتِرَتْ	تُخْتَارُ
هُمَا-m	اِخْتَارَا	يَخْتَارَانِ	يَخْتَارَا	يَخْتَارَا		أُخْتِرَا	يُخْتَارَانِ
هُمَا-f	اِخْتَارَتَا	تَخْتَارَانِ	تَخْتَارَا	تَخْتَارَا		أُخْتِرَتَا	تُخْتَارَانِ
نَحْنُ	اِخْتَرْنَا	نَخْتَارُ	نَخْتَارَ	نَخْتَرْ		أُخْتِرْنَا	نُخْتَارُ
أَنْتُمْ	اِخْتَرْتُمْ	تَخْتَارُونَ	تَخْتَارُوا	تَخْتَارُوا	اِخْتَارُوا	أُخْتِرْتُمْ	تُخْتَارُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	اِخْتَرْتُنَّ	تَخْتَرْنَ	تَخْتَرْنَ	تَخْتَرْنَ	اِخْتَرْنَ	أُخْتِرْتُنَّ	تُخْتَرْنَ
هُمْ	اِخْتَارُوا	يَخْتَارُونَ	يَخْتَارُوا	يَخْتَارُوا		أُخْتِرُوا	يُخْتَارُونَ
هُنَّ	اِخْتَرْنَ	يَخْتَرْنَ	يَخْتَرْنَ	يَخْتَرْنَ		أُخْتِرْنَ	يُخْتَرْنَ

Form VIII Defective root: التَقَى ، يَلْتَقِي AP: مُلِتَقَى PP: مُلْتَقَى VN: التِّقَاءُ 'to encounter, meet'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	التَّقَيْتُ	أَلْتَقِي	أَلْتَقِيَ	أَلْتَقِ		أُلْتَقِيتُ	أُلْتَقَى
أَنْتَ	التَّقَيْتَ	تَلْتَقِي	تَلْتَقِيَ	تَلْتَقِ	التَّقِ	أُلْتَقِيتَ	تُلْتَقَى
أَنْتِ	التَّقَيْتِ	تَلْتَقِينَ	تَلْتَقِي	تَلْتَقِي	التَّقِي	أُلْتَقِيتِ	تُلْتَقَيْنِ
أَنْتُمَا -m/f	التَّقَيْتُمَا	تَلْتَقِيَانِ	تَلْتَقِيَا	تَلْتَقِيَا	التَّقِيَا	أُلْتَقِيتُمَا	تُلْتَقِيَانِ
هُوَ	التَّقَى	يَلْتَقِي	يَلْتَقِيَ	يَلْتَقِ		أُلْتَقِيَ	يُلْتَقَى
هِيَ	التَّقَتْ	تَلْتَقِي	تَلْتَقِيَ	تَلْتَقِ		أُلْتَقِيتْ	تُلْتَقَى
هُمَا -m	التَّقَيَا	يَلْتَقِيَانِ	يَلْتَقِيَا	يَلْتَقِيَا		أُلْتَقِيَا	يُلْتَقِيَانِ
هُمَا -f	التَّقَتَا	تَلْتَقِيَانِ	تَلْتَقِيَا	تَلْتَقِيَا		أُلْتَقِيَتَا	تُلْتَقِيَانِ
نَحْنُ	التَّقَيْنَا	نَلْتَقِي	نَلْتَقِيَ	نَلْتَقِ		أُلْتَقَيْنَا	نُلْتَقَى
أَنْتُمْ	التَّقَيْتُمْ	تَلْتَقُونَ	تَلْتَقُوا	تَلْتَقُوا	التَّقُوا	أُلْتَقَيْتُمْ	تُلْتَقُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	التَّقَيْتُنَّ	تَلْتَقِينَ	تَلْتَقِينَ	تَلْتَقِينَ	التَّقِينَ	أُلْتَقَيْتُنَّ	تُلْتَقِينَ
هُمْ	التَّقَوْا	يَلْتَقُونَ	يَلْتَقُوا	يَلْتَقُوا		أُلْتَقَوْا	يُلْتَقُونَ
هُنَّ	التَّقَيْنَ	يَلْتَقِينَ	يَلْتَقِينَ	يَلْتَقِينَ		أُلْتَقِينَ	يُلْتَقِينَ

Form IX trilateral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *if^ʿall-a* اِفْعَلَّ / *ya-f^ʿall-u* يَفْعَلُّ

Form IX verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that the final root consonant is doubled and the first and second root consonants are not separated by a vowel. Form IX has the past tense stem $iC_1C_2aC_3C_3$ - and the present tense stem $-C_1C_2aC_3C_3$ -. A prefixed elidable *hamza* with *kasra* is added to the past tense stem of Form IX to make it pronounceable; this *hamza* and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers. The vowel of the present tense subject marker in Form IX is *fatHa*.

1.2 Meaning

Form IX verbs generally denote the acquisition of a color or a physical trait. They are normally based on roots occurring in the *ʿaf^ʿal* adjectival pattern, as the colors, e.g., *ʿaswad* ‘black,’ *ʿaHmar* ‘red,’ or adjectives that describe physical defects. These verbs are infrequent in MSA.¹

1.3 Transitivity

Form IX verbs are intransitive.

1.4 Inflection

The prefixed *hamzat al-waSl* with *kasra* in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present tense subject-marker prefix is *fatHa* and the stem vowel in the present tense is *fatHa*.

2 Sound/regular roots in Form IX: *if^ʿall-a* اِفْعَلَّ / *ya-f^ʿall-u* يَفْعَلُّ

to be or become green *ixDarr-a/ya-xDarr-u* اِخْضَرَ / يَخْضَرُّ

¹ Kouloughli (1994, 2007) reports their occurrence as 0.5 percent of all the augmented forms of the verb (II-X).

to be or become red; to blush	iHmarr-a/ya-Hmarr-u	أَحْمَرُ / يَحْمَرُ
to be or become yellow; to become pale	iSfarr-a/ya-Sfarr-u	أَصْفَرُ / يَصْفَرُ

3 Geminate (doubled) roots in Form IX

These roots are rare in Form IX.

4 Hamzated roots in Form IX

These roots are rare in Form IX.

5 Assimilated roots in Form IX

These roots are rare in Form IX.

6 Hollow roots in Form IX

The semi-consonant of the hollow root stabilizes in Form IX and acts as a strong consonant (*waaw* or *yaa*⁹):

to become black	iswadd-a/ya-swadd-u	أَسْوَدَّ / يَسْوَدُّ
to be or become white	ibyaDD-a/ya-byaDD-u	أَبْيَضَّ / يَبْيِضُّ
to squint; be cross-eyed	iHwall-a/ya-Hwall-u	أَحْوَلَ / يَحُولُ
to become crooked	i ^ʿ wajj-a/ya- ^ʿ wajj-u	أَعْوَجَّ / يَعْوِجُ

7 Defective roots in Form IX: rare

8 Form IX verbs in context

أَعْوَجَّتْ الشَّجَرَةُ.

i^ʿwajj-at-i l-shajarat-u.

The tree became crooked.

9 Verbal nouns of Form IX

9.1 Sound/regular root: if^ʿilaal أَفْعَالُ

greenness	ixDiraar	إِخْضَارٍ
blushing	iHmiraar	إِحْمِرَارٍ
yellowness; pallor	iSfiraar	إِصْفِرَارٍ

9.2 Hollow root: *if^ʿilaal*

squinting	<i>iHwilaal</i>	اِحْوِلَال
crookedness	<i>i^ʿwijaaq</i>	اِعْوِجَاج

10 Form IX participles

10.1 Form IX participles (AP and PP): *muf^ʿall* مُفْعَلْ

Form IX active participles and passive participles have the same pattern. However, passive participles in this form are exceedingly rare, since the verbs are intransitive.

Strong/regular root:

blushing	<i>muHmarr</i>	مُحْمَر
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Hollow root:

blackening	<i>muswadd</i>	مُسْوَد
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Form IX Sound root: ^{أَ حَمَرُ} يَحْمَرُ AP: ^{مَحْمَرٌ} PP: VN: ^{أَحْمَرَارٌ} 'to become red'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	أَحْمَرْتُ	أَحْمَرُ	أَحْمَرُ	أَحْمَرُ or أَحْمَرِي			
أَنْتَ	أَحْمَرْتَ	تَحْمَرُ	تَحْمَرُ	تَحْمَرُ or تَحْمَرِي	أَحْمَرُ or أَحْمَرِي		
أَنْتِ	أَحْمَرْتِ	تَحْمَرِينَ	تَحْمَرِي	تَحْمَرِي	أَحْمَرِي		
أَنْتُمَا—m/f	أَحْمَرْتُمَا	تَحْمَرَانِ	تَحْمَرَا	تَحْمَرَا	أَحْمَرَا		
هُوَ	أَحْمَرَّ	يَحْمَرُ	يَحْمَرُ	يَحْمَرُ or يَحْمَرِي			
هِيَ	أَحْمَرَتْ	تَحْمَرُ	تَحْمَرُ	تَحْمَرُ or تَحْمَرِي			
هُمَا—m	أَحْمَرَا	يَحْمَرَانِ	يَحْمَرَا	يَحْمَرَا			
هُمَا—f	أَحْمَرْتَا	تَحْمَرَانِ	تَحْمَرَا	تَحْمَرَا			
نَحْنُ	أَحْمَرْنَا	نَحْمَرُ	نَحْمَرُ	نَحْمَرُ or نَحْمَرِي			
أَنْتُمْ	أَحْمَرْتُمْ	تَحْمَرُونَ	تَحْمَرُوا	تَحْمَرُوا	أَحْمَرُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	أَحْمَرْتُنَّ	تَحْمَرْنَ	تَحْمَرْنَ	تَحْمَرْنَ	أَحْمَرْنَ		
هُمْ	أَحْمَرُوا	يَحْمَرُونَ	يَحْمَرُوا	يَحْمَرُوا			
هُنَّ	أَحْمَرْنَ	يَحْمَرْنَ	يَحْمَرْنَ	يَحْمَرْنَ			

Form IX Hollow root: ^{اَسْوَدَّ} ^{اَسْوَدَ} ^{اَسْوَدُ} AP: ^{مَسْوَدٌ} PP: VN: ^{اِسْوَدَا} 'to turn black'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	اِسْوَدَدْتُ	اَسْوَدُ	اَسْوَدَ	اَسْوَدِ OR اَسْوَدِ			
أَنْتَ	اِسْوَدَدْتَ	تَسْوَدُ	تَسْوَدَ	تَسْوَدِ OR تَسْوَدِ	اِسْوَدِ اِسْوَدِ		
أَنْتِ	اِسْوَدَدْتِ	تَسْوَدِينَ	تَسْوَدِي	تَسْوَدِي	اِسْوَدِي		
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	اِسْوَدَدْتُمَا	تَسْوَدَانِ	تَسْوَدَا	تَسْوَدَا	اِسْوَدَا		
هُوَ	اِسْوَدَ	يَسْوَدُ	يَسْوَدَ	يَسْوَدِ OR يَسْوَدِ			
هِيَ	اِسْوَدَتْ	تَسْوَدُ	تَسْوَدَ	تَسْوَدِ OR تَسْوَدِ			
هُمَا-m	اِسْوَدَا	يَسْوَدَانِ	يَسْوَدَا	يَسْوَدَا			
هُمَا-f	اِسْوَدَتَا	تَسْوَدَانِ	تَسْوَدَا	تَسْوَدَا			
نَحْنُ	اِسْوَدَدْنَا	نَسْوَدُ	نَسْوَدَ	نَسْوَدِ OR نَسْوَدِ			
أَنْتُمْ	اِسْوَدَدْتُمْ	تَسْوَدُونَ	تَسْوَدُوا	تَسْوَدُوا	اِسْوَدُوا		
أَنْتُنَّ	اِسْوَدَدْتُنَّ	تَسْوَدِينَ	تَسْوَدِينَ	تَسْوَدِينَ	اِسْوَدِينَ		
هُمْ	اِسْوَدُوا	يَسْوَدُونَ	يَسْوَدُوا	يَسْوَدُوا			
هُنَّ	اِسْوَدَدْنَ	يَسْوَدْنَ	يَسْوَدْنَ	يَسْوَدْنَ			

Form X triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *istaf^eal-a* اِسْتَفْعَلَ / *ya-staf^eil-u* يَسْتَفْعِلُ

Form X verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that a prefixed /-st-/ is added and the first and second root consonants are not separated by a vowel. Form X has the past tense stem *ista*C₁C₂aC₃- and the present tense stem -*sta*C₁C₂iC₃-. A prefixed elidable *hamza* with *kasra* is added to the past tense stem of Form X to make it pronounceable; this *hamza* and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers. The vowel of the present tense subject marker in Form X is *fatHa*.

1.2 Meaning

Form X verbs may be requestative or estimative but may also reflect other semantic modifications of the base form. Examples of requestatives include:

to request guidance (from s.o.)	<i>istarshad-a/ya-starshid-u</i>	اِسْتَرْشَدَ / يَسْتَرْشِدُ
to request or seek explanation (from s.o.)	<i>istafsar-a/ya-stafsir-u</i>	اِسْتَفْسَرَ / يَسْتَفْسِرُ

Examples of estimatives include:

to consider (s.th.) good	<i>istaHsan-a/ya-staHsin-u</i>	اِسْتَحْسَنَ / يَسْتَحْسِنُ
to consider (s.th.) strange	<i>istaghrab-a/ya-staghrib-u</i>	اِسْتَغْرَبَ / يَسْتَغْرِبُ

Form X may be the reflexive of Form IV: Wright writes (1967, I:44) : “Form X converts the factitive signification of Form IV into the reflexive or middle.” For example, Form IV *ʾa^eadd-a* اَعَدَّ / *yu-^eidd-u* يُعِدُّ ‘to prepare (s.th.)’ and Form X *ista^eadd-a* اِسْتَعَدَّ / *ya-sta^eidd-u* يَسْتَعِدُّ ‘to prepare one’s self, get ready.’

1.3 Transitivity

Form X verbs may be transitive or intransitive.¹

¹ Kouloughli (1994, 208) reports that Form X is transitive more than 75 percent of the time.

1.4 Inflection

The prefixed *hamzat al-waSl* with *kasra* in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present tense subject-marker prefix is *fatHa* and the stem vowel in the present tense is *kasra* (e.g., *istaqbal-a* اِسْتَقْبَلَ / *ya-staqbil-u* يَسْتَقْبِلُ 'to receive (s.o.)').

2 Sound/regular root

to consume	<i>istahlak-a/ya-stahlik-u</i>	اِسْتَهْلَكَ / يَسْتَهْلِكُ
to discover; invent	<i>istanbaT-a/ya-stanbiT-u</i>	اِسْتَنْبَطَ / يَسْتَنْبِطُ
to disdain; detest	<i>istankar-a/ya-stankir-u</i>	اِسْتَنْكَرَ / يَسْتَنْكَرُ
to invest	<i>istathmar-a/ya-stathmir-u</i>	اِسْتَثْمَرَ / يَسْتَثْمِرُ

3 Geminate (doubled) roots in Form X

to continue, to last	<i>istamarr-a/ya-stamirr-u</i>	اِسْتَمَرَّ / يَسْتَمِرُّ
to be independent	<i>istaqall-a/ya-staqill-u</i>	اِسْتَقَلَّ / يَسْتَقِلُّ

4 Hamzated roots in Form X

to rent, to hire	<i>ista'jar-a/ya-sta'jir-u</i>	اِسْتَأْجَرَ / يَسْتَأْجِرُ
to resume	<i>ista'naf-a/ya-sta'nif-u</i>	اِسْتَأْنَفَ / يَسْتَأْنِفُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form X

The root-initial semi-consonant *waaw* or *yaa'* acts as a regular consonant in the inflected verb forms.

to import	<i>istawrad-a/ya-stawrid-u</i>	اِسْتَوْرَدَ / يَسْتَوْرِدُ
to colonize, settle	<i>istawTan-a/ya-stawTin-u</i>	اِسْتَوْطَنَ / يَسْتَوْطِنُ
to awaken, wake up	<i>istayqaZ-a/ya-stayqiZ-u</i>	اِسْتَيْقَظَ / يَسْتَيْقِظُ

6 Hollow roots in Form X

Hollow roots in Form X, whether based on roots with *waaw* or *yaa'* as the medial semi-consonant, inflect with long /ii/ in the present tense stem.

to benefit (from or by) (root: f-y-d / ف - ي - د)	<i>istafaad-a/ya-stafiid-u (min)</i>	اِسْتَفَادَ / يَسْتَفِيدُ
to be able (to do s.th.) (root: T-w-ع / ط - و - ع)	<i>istaTaa'-a/ya-staTii'-u</i>	اِسْتَطَاعَ / يَسْتَطِيعُ

to resign	istaqaal-a/ya-staqiil-u	اِسْتَقَالَ / يَسْتَقِيلُ
(root: q-y-l / ق - ي - ل)		

7 Defective roots in Form X

Defective roots in Form X inflect as -aa/-ii defectives.

to except, exclude	istathnaa/ya-stathnii	اِسْتَثْنَى / يَسْتَثْنِي
to seek an opinion	istaftaa/ya-staftii	اِسْتَفْتَى / يَسْتَفْتِي
to appropriate	istawlaa/ya-stawlīi	اِسْتَوْلَى / يَسْتَوْلِي

8 Examples of Form X verbs in context

حتى عندما استضافت القمة	لا يستطيعون الذهاب.
Hattaa 'ind-a-maa staDaafat-i l-qimmat-a	laa ya-staTii'c-uuna l-dhahaab-a.
even when it hosted the summit [conference]	They are not able to go.

في زيارة لفرنسا تستغرق أسبوعاً
fii ziyaarat-in li-faransaa ta-staghriq-u 'usbuu'c-an
on a visit to France that lasts a week

تستمر فترة الثلوج من تشرين الثاني حتى آذار.
ta-stamirr-u fatrat-u l-thuluuj-i min tishriin-a l-thaanii Hattaa 'aadhaar-a.
The snow season lasts from November until March.

9 Form X verbal nouns: istif^caal اِسْتِفْعَال

9.1 Sound/regular root

inquiry	istixbaar	اِسْتِخْبَار	use	istixdaam	اِسْتِخْدَام
investment	istithmaar	اِسْتِثْمَار	disdain	istinkaar	اِسْتِنْكَار

9.2 Geminate root

The verbal noun of the geminate Form X verb is regular, using the istif^caal pattern and splitting the identical second and third root consonants:

continuation	istimraa	اِسْتِمْرَار	merit, worthiness, claim	istiHqaaq	اِسْتِحْقَاق
preparation	isti'daad	اِسْتِعْدَاد	independence	istiqlaal	اِسْتِقْلَال

9.3 Hamzated root

The verbal noun of hamzated roots of Form X is usually regular in formation. The hamza takes a seat appropriate to its phonetic context.

renting	isti'jaar	اِسْتِجَار	resumption	isti'naaf	اِسْتِنَاف
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9.4 Assimilated root: اسْتِيعَال

In the verbal noun of assimilated-root Form X, the root-initial *waaw* assimilates to the preceding *kasra* and becomes long /ii/:

importation	<i>istiiraad</i> ²	اِسْتِيرَاد	colonizing	<i>istiiTaan</i>	اِسْتِيطَان
awakening	<i>istiiqaaZ</i>	اِسْتِيقَاظ			

9.5 Hollow root: اسْتِفَالَة

The verbal noun of Form X hollow verbs has the form *istifaala* اسْتِفَالَة spelled with *taa*° *marbuuTa*.

benefit	<i>istifaada</i>	اِسْتِفَادَة	ability	<i>istiTaa°a</i>	اِسْتِطَاعَة
response	<i>istijaaba</i>	اِسْتِجَابَة	resignation	<i>istiqaaala</i>	اِسْتِقَالَة

9.6 Defective root: اسْتِفْعَاء

The verbal noun of defective roots in Form X has the pattern *istif°aa*° اسْتِفْعَاء. The weakness of the final root element converts into *hamza*:

exception	<i>istithnaa</i> °	اِسْتِثْنَاء	renunciation	<i>istighnaa</i> °	اِسْتِغْنَاء
plebiscite, referendum	<i>istiftaa</i> °	اِسْتِفْتَاء	appropriation	<i>istiilaa</i> °	اِسْتِيلَاء

9.7 Form X verbal nouns in context

لأنّها استحقاق ديموقراطيّ
li°-anna-haa stiHqaaq-un

diimuuqraaTiyy-un

because it is a democratic **claim**

إلى استثمار بلايين الدولارات
°ilaa stithmaar-i balaayin-i

l-duulaaraat-i

to the **investment** of billions of dollars

في العيد الخمسين لاستقلال لبنان
fii l-°iid-i l-xamsiina l-istiqlaal-i lubnaan-a

on the 50th [anniversary] celebration of the **independence** of Lebanon

10 Form X participles

10.1 Form X active participle (AP): مُسْتَفْعِل مُسْتَفْعِل

10.1.1 Sound/regular root

consumer	<i>mustahlik</i>	مُسْتَهْلِك	orientalist	<i>mustashriq</i>	مُسْتَشْرِق
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² Instead of **istiwraad* or **istiwTaan*. The sequence /-iw-/ is usually avoided in Arabic.

10.1.2 Geminate root: *mustafi^c* مُسْتَفِعٌ

continuous	<i>mustamirr</i>	مُسْتَمِرٌّ	independent	<i>mustaqill</i>	مُسْتَقِلٌّ
ready	<i>musta^cidd</i>	مُسْتَعِدٌّ	entitled; worthy	<i>mustaHiqq</i>	مُسْتَحِقٌّ

10.1.3 Hamzated root

tenant, renter	<i>musta^jjir</i>	مُسْتَأْجِرٌ
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10.1.4 Assimilated root

importer	<i>mustawrid</i>	مُسْتَوْرِدٌ	colonizer	<i>mustawTin</i>	مُسْتَوْطِنٌ
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10.1.5 Hollow root: *mustafiil* مُسْتَفِيلٌ

circular	<i>mustadiir</i>	مُسْتَدِيرٌ	impossible	<i>mustaHiil</i>	مُسْتَحِيلٌ
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10.1.6 Defective root: *mustaf^cin* مُسْتَفْعِنٌ

doing without	<i>mustaghⁿnin</i>	مُسْتَفْعِنٌ
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10.1.7 Form X APs in context

ساحة مستديرة	أحد النواب المستقلين
<i>saaHat-un mustadiirat-un</i>	<i>^aaHad-u l-nuwwaab-i l-mustaqill-iina</i>
a circular courtyard	one of the independent deputies

10.2 Form X passive participle (PP): *mustaf^cal* مُسْتَفْعَلٌ

In addition to acting as an adjective, the Form X passive participle may also serve as a noun of place, denoting the location where the Form X activity takes place.

10.2.1 Sound/regular root: *mustaf^cal* مُسْتَفْعَلٌ

laboratory	<i>mustaxbar</i>	مُسْتَخْبَرٌ	colony	<i>musta^cmara</i>	مُسْتَعْمَرَةٌ
future	<i>mustaqbal</i>	مُسْتَقْبَلٌ	strange	<i>mustaghrab</i>	مُسْتَغْرَبٌ
swamp	<i>mustanqa^c</i>	مُسْتَنْقَعٌ	used	<i>musta^cmal</i>	مُسْتَعْمَلٌ

10.2.2 Geminate root

This root type is rare in the passive participle.

10.2.3 Hamzated root

resumed	<i>mustaʿnaf</i>	مُسْتَأْنَفَ	rented	<i>mustaʿjar</i>	مُسْتَأْجَرَ
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10.2.4 Assimilated root: *mustafʿal* مُسْتَفْعَلٌ

settlement	<i>mustawTana</i>	مُسْتَوْطَنَةً	imported	<i>mustawrad</i>	مُسْتَوْرَدٌ
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10.2.5 Hollow root: *mustafaal* مُسْتَفَالٌ

borrowed; false; artificial	<i>mustaʿaar</i>	مُسْتَعَارٌ	counsellor	<i>mustashaar</i>	مُسْتَشَارٌ
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10.2.6 Defective root: *mustafʿan*

hospital	<i>mustashfan</i>	مُسْتَشْفَى	excepted	<i>mustathnan</i>	مُسْتَثْنَى
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10.2.7 Form X PPs in context

أَسْمَاءٌ مُسْتَعَارَةٌ

ʾasmaaʿ-^oun mustaʿaarat-un

pseudonyms ('borrowed names')

وضع حجر الأساس للمستشفى

*waDʿ-u Hajr-i l-ʾasaas-i li-l-mustashfaa*setting the foundation stone for the
hospital

في المستقبل القريب

fii l-mustaqbal-i l-qariib-i

in the near future

مئة مليون دولار ليست مستغربة.

*miʾat-u milyuun-i duulaar-in lays-at**mustaghrabat-an.*A hundred million dollars is not **unusual**.

Form X Sound root: ^ساِسْتَدِمَ، ^داِسْتَدِمَ AP: ^مسْتَدِمَ PP: ^مسْتَدِمَ VN: ^ااِسْتَدَامَ 'to use'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	اِسْتَدِمْتُ	اِسْتَدِمُ	اِسْتَدِمَ	اِسْتَدِمْ		اُسْتُدِمْتُ	اُسْتُدِمُ
أنت	اِسْتَدِمْتَ	تَسْتَدِمُ	تَسْتَدِمَ	تَسْتَدِمْ	اِسْتَدِمْ	اُسْتُدِمْتَ	تُسْتَدِمُ
أنت	اِسْتَدِمْتَ	تَسْتَدِمِينَ	تَسْتَدِمِي	تَسْتَدِمِي	اِسْتَدِمِي	اُسْتُدِمْتَ	تُسْتَدِمِينَ
أنتما-m/f	اِسْتَدِمْتُمَا	تَسْتَدِمَانِ	تَسْتَدِمَا	تَسْتَدِمَا	اِسْتَدِمَا	اُسْتُدِمْتُمَا	تُسْتَدِمَانِ
هو	اِسْتَدِمَ	يَسْتَدِمُ	يَسْتَدِمَ	يَسْتَدِمْ		اُسْتُدِمَ	يُسْتَدِمُ
هي	اِسْتَدِمَتْ	تَسْتَدِمُ	تَسْتَدِمَ	تَسْتَدِمْ		اُسْتُدِمَتْ	تُسْتَدِمُ
هما-m	اِسْتَدِمَا	يَسْتَدِمَانِ	يَسْتَدِمَا	يَسْتَدِمَا		اُسْتُدِمَا	يُسْتَدِمَانِ
هما-f	اِسْتَدِمْتَا	تَسْتَدِمَانِ	تَسْتَدِمَا	تَسْتَدِمَا		اُسْتُدِمْتَا	تُسْتَدِمَانِ
نحن	اِسْتَدِمْنَا	نَسْتَدِمُ	نَسْتَدِمَ	نَسْتَدِمْ		اُسْتُدِمْنَا	نُسْتَدِمُ
أنتم	اِسْتَدِمْتُمْ	تَسْتَدِمُونَ	تَسْتَدِمُوا	تَسْتَدِمُوا	اِسْتَدِمُوا	اُسْتُدِمْتُمْ	تُسْتَدِمُونَ
أنتن	اِسْتَدِمْتُنَّ	تَسْتَدِمْنَ	تَسْتَدِمْنَ	تَسْتَدِمْنَ	اِسْتَدِمْنَ	اُسْتُدِمْتُنَّ	تُسْتَدِمْنَ
هم	اِسْتَدِمُوا	يَسْتَدِمُونَ	يَسْتَدِمُوا	يَسْتَدِمُوا		اُسْتُدِمُوا	يُسْتَدِمُونَ
هن	اِسْتَدِمْنَ	يَسْتَدِمْنَ	يَسْتَدِمْنَ	يَسْتَدِمْنَ		اُسْتُدِمْنَ	يُسْتَدِمْنَ

Form X Geminate root: ^سس^مس^ر، ^سس^مس^ر AP: ^سس^مس^ر PP: VN: ^سس^مس^ر 'to last'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	اسْتَمَرْتُ	أَسْتَمِرُّ	أَسْتَمِرَّ	أَسْتَمِرْ or أَسْتَمِرَّ			
أنت	اسْتَمَرْتَ	تَسْتَمِرُّ	تَسْتَمِرَّ	تَسْتَمِرْ or تَسْتَمِرَّ	اسْتَمِرْ or اسْتَمِرَّ		
أنت	اسْتَمَرْتَ	تَسْتَمِرِينَ	تَسْتَمِرِي	تَسْتَمِرِي	اسْتَمِرِي		
أنتما—m/f	اسْتَمَرْتُمَا	تَسْتَمِرَانِ	تَسْتَمِرَا	تَسْتَمِرَا	اسْتَمِرَا		
هو	اسْتَمَرَ	يَسْتَمِرُّ	يَسْتَمِرَّ	يَسْتَمِرْ or يَسْتَمِرَّ			
هي	اسْتَمَرَتْ	تَسْتَمِرُّ	تَسْتَمِرَّ	تَسْتَمِرْ or تَسْتَمِرَّ			
هما—m	اسْتَمَرَا	يَسْتَمِرَانِ	يَسْتَمِرَا	يَسْتَمِرَا			
هما—f	اسْتَمَرْتَا	تَسْتَمِرَانِ	تَسْتَمِرَا	تَسْتَمِرَا			
نحن	اسْتَمَرْنَا	نَسْتَمِرُّ	نَسْتَمِرَّ	نَسْتَمِرْ or نَسْتَمِرَّ			
أنتم	اسْتَمَرْتُمْ	تَسْتَمِرُونَ	تَسْتَمِرُوا	تَسْتَمِرُوا	اسْتَمِرُوا		
أنتن	اسْتَمَرْتُنَّ	تَسْتَمِرْنَ	تَسْتَمِرْنَ	تَسْتَمِرْنَ	اسْتَمِرْنَ		
هم	اسْتَمَرُوا	يَسْتَمِرُونَ	يَسْتَمِرُوا	يَسْتَمِرُوا			
هن	اسْتَمَرْنَ	يَسْتَمِرْنَ	يَسْتَمِرْنَ	يَسْتَمِرْنَ			

Form X hamza-initial root: **يَسْتَأْجِرُ**, **اسْتَأْجَرَ** AP: **مُسْتَأْجِرٌ** PP: **مُسْتَأْجَرٌ** VN: **اسْتِئْجَارٌ** 'to rent'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	اسْتَأْجَرْتُ	اسْتَأْجِرُ	اسْتَأْجِرَ	اسْتَأْجِرْ		اسْتُؤْجِرْتُ	اسْتُؤْجِرْ
أَنْتَ	اسْتَأْجَرْتَ	تَسْتَأْجِرُ	تَسْتَأْجِرَ	تَسْتَأْجِرْ	اسْتَأْجِرْ	اسْتُؤْجِرْتَ	تُسْتَأْجِرْ
أَنْتِ	اسْتَأْجَرْتِ	تَسْتَأْجِرِينَ	تَسْتَأْجِرِي	تَسْتَأْجِرِي	اسْتَأْجِرِي	اسْتُؤْجِرْتِ	تُسْتَأْجِرَانِ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	اسْتَأْجَرْتُمَا	تَسْتَأْجِرَانِ	تَسْتَأْجِرَا	تَسْتَأْجِرَا	اسْتَأْجِرَا	اسْتُؤْجِرْتُمَا	تُسْتَأْجِرَانِ
هُوَ	اسْتَأْجَرَ	يَسْتَأْجِرُ	يَسْتَأْجِرَ	يَسْتَأْجِرْ		اسْتُؤْجِرَ	يُسْتَأْجِرْ
هِيَ	اسْتَأْجَرَتْ	تَسْتَأْجِرُ	تَسْتَأْجِرَ	تَسْتَأْجِرْ		اسْتُؤْجِرَتْ	تُسْتَأْجِرْ
هُمَا-m	اسْتَأْجَرَا	يَسْتَأْجِرَانِ	يَسْتَأْجِرَا	يَسْتَأْجِرَا		اسْتُؤْجِرَا	يُسْتَأْجِرَانِ
هُمَا-f	اسْتَأْجَرَتَا	تَسْتَأْجِرَانِ	تَسْتَأْجِرَا	تَسْتَأْجِرَا		اسْتُؤْجِرَتَا	تُسْتَأْجِرَانِ
نَحْنُ	اسْتَأْجَرْنَا	نَسْتَأْجِرُ	نَسْتَأْجِرَ	نَسْتَأْجِرْ		اسْتُؤْجِرْنَا	نُسْتَأْجِرْ
أَنْتُمْ	اسْتَأْجَرْتُمْ	تَسْتَأْجِرُونَ	تَسْتَأْجِرُوا	تَسْتَأْجِرُوا	اسْتَأْجِرُوا	اسْتُؤْجِرْتُمْ	تُسْتَأْجِرُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	اسْتَأْجَرْتُنَّ	تَسْتَأْجِرْنَ	تَسْتَأْجِرْنَ	تَسْتَأْجِرْنَ	اسْتَأْجِرْنَ	اسْتُؤْجِرْتُنَّ	تُسْتَأْجِرْنَ
هُمْ	اسْتَأْجَرُوا	يَسْتَأْجِرُونَ	يَسْتَأْجِرُوا	يَسْتَأْجِرُوا		اسْتُؤْجِرُوا	يُسْتَأْجِرُونَ
هُنَّ	اسْتَأْجَرْنَ	يَسْتَأْجِرْنَ	يَسْتَأْجِرْنَ	يَسْتَأْجِرْنَ		اسْتُؤْجِرْنَ	يُسْتَأْجِرْنَ

Form X Assimilated root: ^سس^تو^رد , ^سس^ور^د AP: ^سس^تو^رد PP: ^سس^ور^د VN: ^سس^تو^رد 'to import'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	اسْتَوْرَدْتُ	أَسْتَوْرِدُ	أَسْتَوْرِدْ	أَسْتَوْرِدْ		اسْتُورِدْتُ	أُسْتَوْرِدُ
أنت	اسْتَوْرَدْتَ	تَسْتَوْرِدُ	تَسْتَوْرِدْ	تَسْتَوْرِدْ	اسْتَوْرِدْ	اسْتُورِدْتَ	تُسْتَوْرِدُ
أنت	اسْتَوْرَدْتَ	تَسْتَوْرِدِينَ	تَسْتَوْرِدِي	تَسْتَوْرِدِي	اسْتَوْرِدِي	اسْتُورِدْتَ	تُسْتَوْرِدِينَ
أنتما-m/f	اسْتَوْرَدْتُمَا	تَسْتَوْرِدَانِ	تَسْتَوْرِدَا	تَسْتَوْرِدَا	اسْتَوْرِدَا	اسْتُورِدْتُمَا	تُسْتَوْرِدَانِ
هو	اسْتَوْرَدَ	يَسْتَوْرِدُ	يَسْتَوْرِدْ	يَسْتَوْرِدْ		اسْتُورِدَ	يُسْتَوْرِدُ
هي	اسْتَوْرَدَتْ	تَسْتَوْرِدُ	تَسْتَوْرِدْ	تَسْتَوْرِدْ		اسْتُورِدَتْ	تُسْتَوْرِدُ
هما-m	اسْتَوْرَدَا	يَسْتَوْرِدَانِ	يَسْتَوْرِدَا	يَسْتَوْرِدَا		اسْتُورِدَا	يُسْتَوْرِدَانِ
هما-f	اسْتَوْرَدَتَا	تَسْتَوْرِدَانِ	تَسْتَوْرِدَا	تَسْتَوْرِدَا		اسْتُورِدَتَا	تُسْتَوْرِدَانِ
نحن	اسْتَوْرَدْنَا	نَسْتَوْرِدُ	نَسْتَوْرِدْ	نَسْتَوْرِدْ		اسْتُورِدْنَا	نُسْتَوْرِدُ
أنتم	اسْتَوْرَدْتُمْ	تَسْتَوْرِدُونَ	تَسْتَوْرِدُوا	تَسْتَوْرِدُوا	اسْتَوْرِدُوا	اسْتُورِدْتُمْ	تُسْتَوْرِدُونَ
أنتن	اسْتَوْرَدْتُنَّ	تَسْتَوْرِدْنَ	تَسْتَوْرِدْنَ	تَسْتَوْرِدْنَ	اسْتَوْرِدْنَ	اسْتُورِدْتُنَّ	تُسْتَوْرِدْنَ
هم	اسْتَوْرَدُوا	يَسْتَوْرِدُونَ	يَسْتَوْرِدُوا	يَسْتَوْرِدُوا		اسْتُورِدُوا	يُسْتَوْرِدُونَ
هن	اسْتَوْرَدْنَ	يَسْتَوْرِدْنَ	يَسْتَوْرِدْنَ	يَسْتَوْرِدْنَ		اسْتُورِدْنَ	يُسْتَوْرِدْنَ

Form X Hollow root: ^سيَسْتَطِيعُ، اسْتَطَاعَ AP: مُسْتَطِيعٌ PP: مُسْتَطَاعٌ VN: اسْتَطَاعَةٌ 'to be able'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أَنَا	اسْتَطَعْتُ	أَسْتَطِيعُ	أَسْتَطِيعَ	أَسْتَطِعْ		أُسْتُطِيعْتُ	أُسْتَطَاعُ
أَنْتَ	اسْتَطَعْتَ	تَسْتَطِيعُ	تَسْتَطِيعَ	تَسْتَطِعْ	اسْتَطِعْ	أُسْتُطِيعْتَ	تُسْتَطَاعُ
أَنْتِ	اسْتَطَعْتَ	تَسْتَطِيعِينَ	تَسْتَطِيعِي	تَسْتَطِيعِي	اسْتَطِيعِي	أُسْتُطِيعْتَ	تُسْتَطَاعِينَ
أَنْتُمَا-m/f	اسْتَطَعْتُمَا	تَسْتَطِيعَانِ	تَسْتَطِيعَا	تَسْتَطِيعَا	اسْتَطِيعَا	أُسْتُطِيعْتُمَا	تُسْتَطَاعَانِ
هُوَ	اسْتَطَاعَ	يَسْتَطِيعُ	يَسْتَطِيعَ	يَسْتَطِعْ		أُسْتُطِيعَ	يُسْتَطَاعُ
هِيَ	اسْتَطَاعَتْ	تَسْتَطِيعُ	تَسْتَطِيعَ	تَسْتَطِعْ		أُسْتُطِيعَتْ	تُسْتَطَاعُ
هُمَا-m	اسْتَطَاعَا	يَسْتَطِيعَانِ	يَسْتَطِيعَا	يَسْتَطِيعَا		أُسْتُطِيعَا	يُسْتَطَاعَانِ
هُمَا-f	اسْتَطَاعَتَا	تَسْتَطِيعَانِ	تَسْتَطِيعَا	تَسْتَطِيعَا		أُسْتُطِيعَتَا	تُسْتَطَاعَانِ
نَحْنُ	اسْتَطَعْنَا	نَسْتَطِيعُ	نَسْتَطِيعَ	نَسْتَطِعْ		أُسْتُطِعْنَا	نُسْتَطَاعُ
أَنْتُمْ	اسْتَطَعْتُمْ	تَسْتَطِيعُونَ	تَسْتَطِيعُوا	تَسْتَطِيعُوا	اسْتَطِيعُوا	أُسْتُطِعْتُمْ	تُسْتَطَاعُونَ
أَنْتُنَّ	اسْتَطَعْتُنَّ	تَسْتَطِيعْنَ	تَسْتَطِيعْنَ	تَسْتَطِيعْنَ	اسْتَطِيعْنَ	أُسْتُطِعْتُنَّ	تُسْتَطَاعْنَ
هُمْ	اسْتَطَاعُوا	يَسْتَطِيعُونَ	يَسْتَطِيعُوا	يَسْتَطِيعُوا		أُسْتُطِيعُوا	يُسْتَطَاعُونَ
هُنَّ	اسْتَطَعْنَ	يَسْتَطِيعْنَ	يَسْتَطِيعْنَ	يَسْتَطِيعْنَ		أُسْتُطِيعْنَ	يُسْتَطَاعْنَ

Form X Defective root: ^سس^ثن^ا، ^سس^ثن^ي AP: ^مس^ثن^ن PP: ^مس^ثن^ي VN: ^اس^ثن^{اء} 'to except'

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Passive	Passive
	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Imperfect	Perfect	Imperfect
		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Imperative		
أنا	أَسْثَنَيْتُ	أَسْثَنِي	أَسْثَنِي	أَسْثَنْ		أَسْثَنَيْتُ	أَسْثَنِي
أنت	أَسْثَنَيْتَ	تَسْثَنِي	تَسْثَنِي	تَسْثَنْ	اسْثَنْ	أَسْثَنَيْتَ	تَسْثَنِي
أنت	أَسْثَنَيْتَ	تَسْثَنِينَ	تَسْثَنِي	تَسْثَنِي	اسْثَنِي	أَسْثَنَيْتَ	تَسْثَنِينَ
أنتما-m/f	أَسْثَنَيْتُمَا	تَسْثَنِيَانِ	تَسْثَنِيَا	تَسْثَنِيَا	اسْثَنِيَا	أَسْثَنَيْتُمَا	تَسْثَنِيَانِ
هو	اسْثَنَى	يَسْثَنِي	يَسْثَنِي	يَسْثَنْ		اسْثَنَى	يَسْثَنِي
هي	اسْثَنَتْ	تَسْثَنِي	تَسْثَنِي	تَسْثَنْ		اسْثَنَتْ	تَسْثَنِي
هما-m	اسْثَنِيَا	يَسْثَنِيَانِ	يَسْثَنِيَا	يَسْثَنِيَا		اسْثَنِيَا	يَسْثَنِيَانِ
هما-f	اسْثَنِيَا	تَسْثَنِيَانِ	تَسْثَنِيَا	تَسْثَنِيَا		اسْثَنِيَا	تَسْثَنِيَانِ
نحن	اسْثَنَيْنَا	نَسْثَنِي	نَسْثَنِي	نَسْثَنْ		اسْثَنَيْنَا	نَسْثَنِي
أنتم	اسْثَنَيْتُمْ	تَسْثَنُونَ	تَسْثَنُوا	تَسْثَنُوا	اسْثَنُوا	اسْثَنَيْتُمْ	تَسْثَنُونَ
أنتن	اسْثَنَيْتُنَّ	تَسْثَنِينَ	تَسْثَنِينَ	تَسْثَنِينَ	اسْثَنِينَ	اسْثَنَيْتُنَّ	تَسْثَنِينَ
هم	اسْثَنُوا	يَسْثَنُونَ	يَسْثَنُوا	يَسْثَنُوا		اسْثَنُوا	يَسْثَنُونَ
هن	اسْثَنِينَ	يَسْثَنِينَ	يَسْثَنِينَ	يَسْثَنِينَ		اسْثَنِينَ	يَسْثَنِينَ

Forms XI–XV trilateral verb

These forms of the trilateral verb are chiefly archaic and/or poetic in use. For the sake of completeness, they are described briefly here, but few examples occurred in the corpus, and even in Classical Arabic, they are rare. Examples are taken from Wright 1967, I:43–47 or Fleisch 1979, II: 330–40.¹

1 Form XI: *if^caall-a* اِفْعَالٌ / *ya-f^caall-u* يَفْعَالُ

This form is related to Form IX and usually denotes a similar concept: the acquisition or existence of a color or physical trait.² It is prefixed with *hamzat al-waSl* and is distinguished by the lengthening of the stem vowel from *fatHa* to *ʾalif*, and the doubling of the final consonant, giving the pattern $iC_1C_2aaC_3C_3-a/ya-C_1C_2aaC_3C_3-u$. It is intransitive.

to become temporarily red	<i>iHmaarr-a/ya-Hmaarr-u</i>	اِحْمَارٌ / يَحْمَارُ
to become temporarily yellow	<i>iSfaarr-a/ya-Sfaarr-u</i>	اِصْفَارٌ / يَصْفَارُ
to be dark brown	<i>ismaarr-a/ya-smaarr-u</i>	اِسْمَارٌ / يَسْمَارُ

1.1 Verbal noun: *if^ciilaal* اِفْعِيَالٌ

turning temporarily red	<i>iHmiiraar</i>	اِحْمِيرَارٌ
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2 Form XII: *if^caw^cal-a* اِفْعَوَعَلٌ / *ya-f^caw^cil-u* يَفْعَوَعَلُ

Form XII has the pattern $iC_1C_2awC_2C_3-a/ya-C_1C_2awC_2iC_3-u$, with doubling of the medial radical and insertion of a *waaw* between the two doubled radicals. It is

¹ Fleisch (1979, II:330–35) provides examples and discussion of the etymology of these forms. Haywood and Nahmad (1962, 152–53) have a comprehensive verb form chart that includes Forms XI–XV. Although some grammars include the verbal nouns of these forms, most do not include the participles, so I have omitted these, except where they are found in Wehr 1979.

² See Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 185. Wright (1967, I:43–44) states: “According to some grammarians, the distinction between the ninth and the eleventh forms is, that the ninth indicates permanent colours or qualities, the eleventh those that are transitory or mutable . . . Others hold that Form XI indicates a higher degree of the quality than IX.”

prefixed with *hamzat al-waSl*. In meaning it, like Form IX, usually indicates color or physical quality.

to be convex; be humpbacked *iHdawdab-a/ya-Hdawdib-u* أَحَدَوْدَبَ / يَحْدَوْدِبُ

2.1 Verbal noun: *if^cii^caal*

becoming humpbacked *iHdiidaab* احْدِيدَاب

2.2 Active participle: *muf^caw^cil*

mounded; humpbacked *muHdawdib* مُحَدَوْدِبٌ

3 Form XIII: *if^cawwal-a* اِفْعَوَّلَ / *ya-f^cawwil-u* يَفْعَوِّلُ

Form XIII inserts a doubled *waaw* between the second and third root consonants, yielding the pattern $iC_1C_2awwaC_3-a/ya-C_1C_2awwiC_3-u$. It, too, usually denotes color or quality but may also denote an action.

to last long *ixrawwaT-a/ya-xrawwiT-u* اِخْرَوِّطَ / يَخْرَوِّطُ

to mount a camel without
a saddle *i^clawwaT-a/ya-^clawwiT-u* اِعْلَوِّطَ / يِعْلَوِّطُ

3.1 Verbal noun: *if^ciwwaal* اِفْعَوَّالٌ

lasting long *ixriwwaaT* اِخْرَوِّاطٌ

4 Form XIV: *if^canlal-a* اِفْعَنَّالَ / *ya-f^canlil-u* يَفْعَنَّالُ

Form XIV has the pattern $iC_1C_2anC_3aC_3-a/ya-C_1C_2anC_3iC_3-u$, with doubling of the third radical and insertion of a *nuun*³ between the second and third radicals. It is prefixed with *hamzat al-waSl*. In meaning it, like Form IX, usually indicates color or physical quality.

to be dark *isHankak-a* اِسْحَنَّكَ

4.1 Verbal noun: *if^cinlaal* اِفْعَنَّالٌ

being dark *isHinkaak* اِسْحَنَّكَ

5 Form XV: *if^canlaa* اِفْعَنْلَى / *ya-f^canlii* يَفْعَنْلَى

Form XV resembles Form XIV in that there is an inserted *nuun* between the second and third radicals of the root. However, there is an added suffix *-aa/* which turns

³ Note that this form with its inserted *nuun* correlates closely with Form III of quadrilateral verbs (also very rare): e.g., *ibranshaq-a* اِبْرَنْشَقَ / *ya-branshiq-u* يَبْرَنْشِقُ 'to bloom.' The difference is that in the quadrilateral, the third and fourth root consonants are different. See Chapter 33, section 4.

the verb into a defective of the -aa/-ii type. It has the pattern iC₁C₂anC₃aa/ya-C₁C₂anC₃ii.

to be stout and strong	i ^ʿ landaa/ya- ^ʿ landii	اعْلَنْدِي / يَعْْلَنْدِي
to conquer, vanquish	israndaa/ya-srandii	اسْرَنْدِي / يَسْرَنْدِي

5.1 Verbal noun: if^ʿinlaa^ʾ افْعَنْلَاءِ

conquering	isrindaa ^ʾ	اسْرِنْدَاءِ
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Quadriliteral verbs

1 Basic characteristics of quadriliteral verb roots (أفعال رباعية *ʿafʿaal rubaaʿiyya*)

Quadriliteral verb roots contain four consonants instead of three (e.g., *zaxraf-a* زَخَرَفَ / *yu-zaxrif-u* يُزَخِّرُ 'to embellish, adorn' or *fahras-a* فَهَرَسَ / *yu-fahris-u* يَفْهَرُسُ 'to compile an index, to index'). Sometimes the four consonants are all different and sometimes they are reduplicated.

1.1 Reduplicated quadriliteral verbs

In reduplicated quadriliteral verbs the first two consonants repeat themselves (somewhat like English words such as *chitchat*, *zigzag*, or *mishmash*). These verbs usually refer to repeated motion or sound. When referring to a sound, they are onomatopoeic; that is, they reflect or mimic the sound itself (e.g., *rafrafa* رَفَرَفَ / *yu-rafrif-u* يَرَفِرِفُ 'to flutter,' *waswas-a* وَسَّوَسَ / *yu-waswis-u* يُوَسِّوَسُ 'to whisper').

1.2 Complex roots

Complex roots combine elements from more than one root into a quadriliteral verb (e.g., *basmala* بَسَّمَلَ / *yu-basmil-u* يُبَسِّمِلُ 'to say *bi-sm-i llaah-i* بِسْمِ اللَّهِ 'in the name of God.')

1.3 Borrowed roots

Quadriliteral verb patterns are sometimes used to borrow verbal concepts from another language (e.g., *talfan-a* تَلَفَّنَ / *yu-talfin-u* يُتَلَفَّنُ 'to telephone').

1.4 Forms

Quadriliteral roots occur in four different forms or stem classes, labeled with roman numerals I-IV, along the same lines as the labeling system for the ten forms of the triliteral verb. Forms I and II of the quadriliterals are by far the most common in MSA.

2 Form I: *faʿlal-a* فَعَّلَلَ / *yu-faʿlil-u* يُفَعِّلِلُ

2.1 Pattern

The consonant-vowel distribution pattern for Form I of the quadriliteral verb mirrors Form II of the triliteral: $C_1aC_2C_3aC_4$ / $yu-C_1aC_2C_3iC_4$. This is possible because

the trilateral Form II is increased by one consonant by virtue of the doubling of its second radical. The difference between them is that in a quadrilateral verb Form I, the two middle consonants are different, whereas in a Form II trilateral, they are the same.

2.2 Transitivity

Form I quadrilaterals may be transitive or intransitive.

2.3 Regular quadrilaterals

In regular or sound quadrilateral roots, all the consonants are different. Most quadrilaterals of this type contain a “liquid” consonant: /r/, /l/, /n/.¹

to obstruct	<i>‘arqal-a/yu-‘arqil-u</i>	عَرَقَلَ / يَعْزِلُ
to translate	<i>tarjam-a/yu-tarjim-u</i>	تَرْجَمَ / يَتَرْجِمُ
to dominate	<i>sayTar-a/yu-sayTir-u</i>	سَيَطِرُ / يَسِيْطِرُ
to prove	<i>barhan-a/yu-barhin-u</i>	بَرَّهَنَ / يَبْرِهِنُ

2.4 Reduplicated quadrilaterals

In these roots the first two consonants are repeated, either in imitation of a sound or to refer to a movement, especially a repeated movement.²

to gargle	<i>gharghar-a/yu-gharghir-u</i>	غَرَّغَرَ / يَغْرِغِرُ
to flutter	<i>rafraf-a/yu-rafrif-u</i>	رَفَّرَفَ / يَرْفِرِفُ
to move, to budge	<i>zaHzaH-a/yu-zaHziH-u</i>	زَحَّزَحَ / يَزْحِزِحُ
to ruin, demolish	<i>Da‘Da‘a/yu-Da‘Di‘-u</i>	ضَعَّضَعَ / يَضْعِضِعُ
to shake	<i>zalzal-a/yu-zalzil-u</i>	زَلَّزَلَ / يَزْلِزِلُ
to chatter	<i>tharthar-a/yu-tharthir-u</i>	ثَرَّثَرَ / يَثْرِثِرُ

2.5 Complex roots

2.5.1 Acronymic roots

This involves taking the initial letters of a string of words in a traditional, formulaic saying, or an often-repeated phrase, and turning them into a lexical root. It is

¹ Certain quadrilateral verbs appear to be expanded trilaterals, with liquid or continuant phonemes /r/, /n/, /m/, /l/, or /w/ added to the root. They are called *mulHaaqat bi-l-rubaa‘iyy*, مَلْحَقَاتُ بِالرُّبَاعِيّ، for example: *zaHlafa* زَحْلَفَ / *yu-zaHlif-u* يَزْحَلِفُ ‘to roll along’ from z-H-f – ف – ح – ز ‘advance slowly.’ See Roochnik, n.d., Sterling 1904, 26–27; Wright 1967, I:47–48.

² For a semantic analysis of reduplicated quadrilateral verbs see Procházka 1993.

somewhat like creating an acronym, but in Arabic this particular usage creates verbs that denote saying a set phrase.

basmal-a/you-basiml-u بَسَمَلْ / يَبْسِمُلْ
to say: *bi-ism-i llaah-i* بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ ('in the name of God')

Hawqal-a/you-Hawqil-u حَوَقَلْ / يَحْوَقِلْ
to say: لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ
laa Hawl-a wa laa quwwat-a 'illaa bi-llaah-i
(‘There is no power and no strength save in God’)

fadhlak-a/you-fadhlik-u فَذَلَكَ / يَفْذَلِكْ
to say فَذَلِكَ كَذَا وَكَذَا
fa-dhaalika kadhaa wa-kadhaa . . .
(‘And that is thus and so . . .’)

2.5.2 Compound roots

These verbs combine consonants from two roots. They are mostly of older usage.

to worship the sun *‘absham-a/you-‘abshim-u* عَبَشَمَ / يَعْبِشُمُ
(from roots: ع - ب - د *‘b-d* ‘to serve, to worship’ and ش - م - س *sh-m-s* ‘sun’)

to be petrified *jalmad-a/you-jalmid-u* جَلَمَدَ / يَجْلَمِدُ
(from roots: ج - م - د *j-m-d* ‘harden’ and ج - ل - د *j-l-d* ‘freeze’)

2.6 Borrowed quadrilaterals

Verbal concepts from foreign languages can sometimes be transferred into Arabic through use of the quadriliteral verb pattern.

to telephone *talfan-a/you-talfin-u* تَلْفَنَ / يَتَلْفَنُ
to televise *talfaz-a/you-talfiz-u* تَلْفَزَ / يَتَلْفِزُ
to philosophize *falsaf-a/you-falsif-u* فَلَسَفَ / يَفَلْسِفُ

3 Form II quadrilaterals: *tafa‘lal-a* تَفَعَّلَ / *ya-tafa‘lal-u* يَتَفَعَّلُ

3.1 Pattern

The consonant-vowel distribution pattern for Form II quadrilaterals mirrors Form V of the trilateral verb: *taCaCCaC-a* / *ya-taCaCCaC-u*.

3.2 Meaning

In meaning, this form is often the reflexive, resultative, or passive of the Form I quadriliteral.

become electrified	<i>takahrab-a/ya-takahrab-u</i>	تَكْهَرَبُ / يَتَكْهَرَبُ
to decline, go down	<i>tadahwar-a/ya-tadahwar-u</i>	تَدَهْوَرُ / يَتَدَهْوَرُ
to be crystallized	<i>tabalwar-a/ya-tabalwar-u</i>	تَبَلُّورُ / يَتَبَلُّورُ
to adorn one's self, dress up	<i>tabahraj-a/ya-tabahraj-u</i>	تَبَهَّرَجُ / يَتَبَهَّرَجُ
to acclimatize (o.s.)	<i>ta'aqlam-a/ya-ta'aqlam-u</i>	تَأَقْلَمُ / يَتَأَقْلَمُ
to become dilapidated	<i>taDa^cDa^c-a/ya-taDa^cDa^c-u</i>	تَضْعَعُ / يَتَضْعَعُ

3.3 Denominals

Form II quadriliterals may be denominalizations, as in the following verb:

to concentrate, be centered, concentrated	<i>tamarkaz-a/ya-tamarkaz-u</i>	تَمَرَّكَزُ / يَتَمَرَّكَزُ
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(from the noun of place, *markaz* مَرْكَز 'center' from the root ر - ك - ز *r-k-z*)

3.4 Verbs of comportment

Form II quadriliterals may also have a meaning of acting or behaving in a certain way, e.g.,

to play the philosopher, act like a philosopher	<i>tafalsaf-a/ya-tafalsaf-u</i>	تَفَلَّسَفُ / يَتَفَلَّسَفُ
to act American	<i>ta'amrak-a/ya-ta'amrak-u</i>	تَأَمَّرَكَ / يَتَأَمَّرَكَ

4 Form III: *if^canlal-a* اِفْعَنَّالُ / *ya-f^canlil-u* يَفْعَنَّالُ

This form of the quadriliteral verb is rare in MSA. It has an infixed /-n-/ inserted between the second and third radicals of the root and corresponds in meaning to form VII of the trilateral roots. It is normally intransitive. No occurrences of this form of the verb occurred in the data covered for this book. Examples include:

to bloom, to flourish (Wright 1967, I:49)	<i>ibranshaq-a/ya-branshiq-u</i>	اِبْرَنْشَقُ / يَبْرَنْشَقُ
to be proud, raise the nose (Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 263)	<i>ixranTam-a/ya-xranTim-u</i>	اِخْرَنْطَمُ / يَخْرَنْطَمُ

³ Whereas Wright (1967) as well as Haywood and Nahmad (1962) give this Form as III, other authors, including the MECAS grammar (1965, 225) and Sterling (1904, 26) give it as Form IV of the quadriliteral, and Form IV as Form III.

5 Form IV: *if^ʿalall-a* / *ya-f^ʿalill-u*

Form IV of the quadriliteral corresponds in meaning to Form IX of the trilateral verb. The final radical is doubled, giving the pattern iCCaCaCC-a, ya-CCaCiCC-u. It denotes an intensity of quality or degree and is intransitive.

to be calm, serene, reassured	<i>iTma^ʿann-a/ya-Tma^ʿinn-u</i>	اِطْمَأَنَّ / يَطْمَئِنُّ
to vanish away, disappear	<i>iDmaHall-a/ya-DmaHill-u</i>	اِضْمَحَلَّ / يَضْمَحِلُّ
to shudder	<i>iqsha^ʿarr-a/ya-qsha^ʿirr-u</i>	اِقْشَعَرَ / يَقْشَعِرُّ
to stretch	<i>ishra^ʿabb-a/ya-shra^ʿibb-u</i>	اِشْرَبَّ / يَشْرَبُّ
to shrink, shudder, recoil	<i>ishma^ʿazz-a/ya-shma^ʿizz-u</i>	اِشْمَأَزَّ / يَشْمَأِزُّ
to become dark, gloomy	<i>ikfaharr-a/ya-kfahirr-u</i>	اِكْفَهَرَ / يَكْفَهُرُّ

6 Examples of quadriliteral verbs in context

Form I:

بحلق في عينيها.

baHlaq-a fii ^ʿayn-ay-haa.

He stared into her eyes.

الكتب التي لم تُفهرس

al-kutub-u llatii lam tu-fahras

the books which have not been indexed

يترجم إلى لغته.

yu-tarjim-u ^ʿilaa lughat-i-hi.

He translates into his language.

ويترجمونه خطأ.

wa-yu-tarjim-uuna-hu xaTT-an.

And they translate it literally.

Form II:

تزحزحت الصخرة.

tazaHzaH-at-i l-Saxrat-u.

The rock moved.

شيئاً فشيئاً يمكن أن يتدهرج.

shay^ʿ-an fa-shay^ʿ-an yu-mkin-u ^ʿan ya-tadaHraj-a.

It can deteriorate ('it is possible that it deteriorate') bit by bit.

Form IV:

وضع يطمئن فيه جميع المواطنين

waD^ʿ-un ya-Tma^ʿinn-u fii-hi jamii^ʿ-u

l-muwaaTin-iina

a situation in which all citizens can
be reassured

حيث تشرئب الطريق

Hayth-u ta-shra^ʿibb-u l-Tariiq-u

where the road stretches

7 Quadriliteral verbal nouns

7.1 Form I quadriliteral verbal nouns

7.1.1 *fa'laala* فَعَلَّلَ ~ *fi'lila* فَعِلَّلَ

translation	tarjama	تَرْجَمَة	obstacle; obstruction	'arqala	عَرَقَلَة
chattering	tharthara	ثَرَثَرَة	link, chain	silsila	سِلْسِلَة

7.1.2 *fu'laal* فُعْلَال ~ *fa'laal* فَعْلَال ~ *fi'laal* فِعْلَال

proof, evidence	burhaan	بُرْهَان	earthquake	zilzaal	زِلْزَال
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7.2 Form II quadriliteral verbal nouns: *tafa'lul* تَفَعَّلَ

deterioration	tadahwur	تَدَهُّور	sequence; continuity	tasalsul	تَسَلُّسُل
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7.3 Form III quadriliteral verbal nouns: *if'inlaal* اِفْعِنَّلَ

flourishing	ibrinshaaq	اِبْرِنْشَاق
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7.4 Form IV quadriliteral verbal nouns: *if'illaal* اِفْعِلَّلَ

serenity	iTmi'naan	اِطْمِئْنَان	vanishing	iDmiHlaal	اِضْمِحْلَال
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7.5 Quadriliteral verbal nouns in context

لوقف تدهور الدينار	سلسلة جبال
li-waqf-i <i>tadahwur-i</i> l-diinaar	silsilat-u jibaal-in
to stop the decline of the dinar	a chain of mountains

8 Form I quadriliteral participles

Quadriliteral verb participles are formed on the same basis as participles of trilateral verb roots. There are active and passive participles, all prefixed with /mu-/ and differentiated by a stem vowel /-i-/ for the active participle and stem vowel /-a-/ for the passive participle. They occur both as nouns and as adjectives.

8.1 Quadriliteral active participle (QAP)

8.1.1 Form I QAP: *mufa'lil* مُفَعِّل

engineer	muhandis	مُهَنْدِس	explosive	mufarqi'	مُفَرِّقِع
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8.1.2 Form II QAP: *mutafa^lil* مُتَفَعِّل

deteriorating *mutadahwir* مُتَدَهْوِر crystalline *mutabalwir* مُتَبَلْوِر

8.1.3 Form III QAP: rare

8.1.4 Form IV QAP: *muf^{al}alil* مُفَعَّل

serene, calm *muTma^linn* مُطْمَئِنِّ dusky, gloomy *mukfahirr* مُكْفَهِّر

8.1.5 QAPs in context

هم في حال صحّة متدهورة.
hum fii Haal-i SiHHat-in mutadahwirat-in.
 They are in a deteriorating state of health.

بنايات حي المهندسين
binaayaat-u Hayy-i l-muhandis-iina
 the buildings of the Muhandisin ('engineers') quarter

8.2 Quadriliteral passive participle (QPP)

8.2.1 Form I passive participle: *mufa^lal* مُفَعَّل

camp	<i>mu^laskar</i>	مُعَسَّكَر	embellished	<i>muzarkash</i>	مُزَرَّكَش
series	<i>musalsal</i>	مُسَلَّسَل	crystallized	<i>mubalwar</i>	مُبَلَّوَر
old-timer	<i>muxaDram</i>	مُخَضَّرَم	electrified	<i>mukahrab</i>	مُكَهَّرَب

8.2.2 Form II QPP: *mutafa^lal* مُتَفَعَّل

This form is rare.

8.2.3 Form III and Form IV QPP

These are rare.

8.2.4 Quadriliteral PPs in context

مسلسل جديد
musalsal-un jadiid-un
 a new series

مقالات مترجمة من العربية
maqalaat-un mutarjamat-un min-a l-^larabiyyat-i
 articles translated from Arabic

Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive

Mood or “mode” refers to the Arabic verb properties **indicative, subjunctive, and jussive**.¹ These categories reflect or are caused by contextual modalities that condition the action of the verb. For example, the indicative mood tends to be characteristic of straightforward, factual statements or questions, while the subjunctive mood reflects an attitude toward the action such as doubt, desire, intent, wishing, or necessity, and the jussive mood, when used for the imperative, indicates an attitude of command, request, or need for action on the part of the speaker.

In Arabic, mood marking is only done on the present tense or imperfective stem; there are no mood variants for the past tense. The Arabic moods are therefore non-finite; that is, they do not refer to points in time and are not differentiated by tense. Tense is inferred from context and other parts of the clause.²

1 The indicative mood: *al-muDaari*^c *al-marfuu*^c المضارع المرفوع

The indicative mood is considered the basic mood; it is used in factual statements or straightforward questions. It is also used in statements about the future, either with the future markers *sa-* سـ or *sawfa* سوف, or in a context that refers to a future action. A full paradigm of the indicative mood for a regular Form I verb is as follows:

¹ An additional mood, the “energetic” exists in Classical Arabic but not in MSA. It denotes an intensified affirmation of action. See Wright 1967, I:61ff. and Fischer 2002, 110 and 118 for more on the energetic mood.

² The question of mood marking (on verbs) is a central one in traditional Arabic grammar, along with case marking (on nouns and adjectives). Moods fall under the topic of morphology because they are indicated in Arabic word structure, that is, they are usually marked by suffixes or modifications of suffixes attached to the present tense verb stem. Moods also, however, fall under the topic of syntax because their use is determined either by particles which govern their occurrence, or by the narrative context in general, including attitude of the speaker and intended meaning. They are therefore referred to in some reference works and theoretical discussions as “morphosyntactic” categories, combining features of morphology and syntax.

1.2 Indicative mood paradigm

Present tense stem -^crif- - عَرَفَ - 'know'

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَعْرِفُ ^{a-c} rif-u		نَعْرِفُ na- ^c rif-u
Second person m.	تَعْرِفُ ta- ^c rif-u	تَعْرِفَانِ ta- ^c rif-aani	تَعْرِفُونَ ta- ^c rif-uuna
f.	تَعْرِفِينَ ta- ^c rif-iina	تَعْرِفَانِ ta- ^c rif-aani	تَعْرِفْنَ ta- ^c rif-na
Third person m.	يَعْرِفُ ya- ^c rif-u	يَعْرِفَانِ ya- ^c rif-aani	يَعْرِفُونَ ya- ^c rif-uuna
f.	تَعْرِفُ ta- ^c rif-u	تَعْرِفَانِ ta- ^c rif-aani	يَعْرِفْنَ ya- ^c rif-na

It is the **suffix on the verb that indicates the mood**. The indicative mood shows the full form of the suffixes, and that is one reason why it is considered the base form. Particular indicators of the indicative are:

1. the short vowel *Damma* (-u) suffix on five of the persons (I, we, you m.sg., he and she);³
2. the /-na/ suffix after the long vowel /-uu-/ in the second and third persons masculine plural and after /-ii-/ in the second person feminine singular;
3. the /-ni/ suffix after the long vowel /-aa-/ in the dual.

1.3 Examples of indicative in context

1.3.1 Statements

تَعْرِفُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ.
ta-^crif-u kull-a shay³-in.
She knows everything.

نَرْحَبُ بِزبَائِنِنَا.
nu-raHHib-u bi-zabaa³in-i-naa.
We welcome our customers.

³ It is this *Damma* suffix that leads to the name of the mood, because the *Damma* mood marker resembles the *Damma* case marker on nouns. Both the indicative mood and the nominative case are called *marfuu'* in Arabic.

يغادرُ القاهرةَ اليوم.
yu-ghaadir-u l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a.
 He leaves Cairo today.

نتشرفُ.
na-tasharraf-u.
 We are honored.

يدرجونها في البرامج.
yu-drij-uuna-haa fii l-baraamij-i.
 They include it in the programs.

تستمرُّ ساعتين.
ta-stamirr-u saa^cat-ayni.
 It lasts two hours.

1.3.2 Questions

ماذا تفعل؟
maadhaa ta-f^cal-u?
 What does it (f.) do?

لماذا تحبه؟
li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u-hu?
 Why do you like it (m.)?

1.3.3 Future tense

1.3.3.1 WITH FUTURE MARKER

سوف يتحسنُ.
sawfa ya-taHassan-u.
 It will get better.

سيعقدون اجتماعاً.
sa-ya-^cqud-uuna jtima^ca-an.
 They will hold a meeting.

1.3.3.2 BY CONTEXT

يغادرُ العاصمةَ غداً.
yu-ghaadir-u l-^caaSimat-a ghad-an.
 He leaves (will leave) the capital tomorrow.

1.3.4 Passive indicative

The indicative may occur in the passive voice, for example:

أسعار لا تُصدق!
^oas^caar-un laa tu-Saddaq-u!
 Unbelievable prices!
 ('prices that are not believed')

تُستخدم لصنع الأوراق.
tu-staxdam-u li-San^c-i l-^oawraaq-i
 It is used to make papers.

2 The subjunctive mood: *al-muDaari^c al-manSuub* المضارع المنصوب

The subjunctive mood is a form of the present tense, or imperfect, that occurs under specific circumstances in Arabic, taking the form of a distinct subset of inflectional endings on the imperfect verb stem, in other words, a separate conjugation. It has the following features: the short inflectional vowel suffix is *fatHa* (instead of the *Damma* of the indicative). For the longer verb suffixes, such as

/-uuna/, /-iina/, and /-aani/, the *nuun* and its short vowel are dropped, so the suffixes are left as long vowels /-uu/, /-ii/, /-aa/.⁴

Because of the use of *fatHa* instead of *Damma* as the short vowel suffix, the subjunctive mood is referred to in Arabic as *al-muDaari*^c *al-manSuub* المضارع المنصوب, using the same term for the subjunctive as for the accusative case on nouns and adjectives (*al-manSuub* المنصوب).

Subjunctive mood paradigm

Present tense stem -^crif- عرف - 'know'

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَعْرِفُ ^{a-c} rif-a		نَعْرِفُ na- ^c rif-a
Second person m.	تَعْرِفُ ta- ^c rif-a	تَعْرِفَا ta- ^c rif-aa	تَعْرِفُوا ta- ^c rif-uu
f.	تَعْرِفِي ta- ^c rif-ii	تَعْرِفَا ta- ^c rif-aa	تَعْرِفْنَ ta- ^c rif-na
Third person m.	يَعْرِفُ ya- ^c rif-a	يَعْرِفَا ya- ^c rif-aa	يَعْرِفُوا ya- ^c rif-uu
f.	تَعْرِفُ ta- ^c rif-a	تَعْرِفَا ta- ^c rif-aa	يَعْرِفْنَ ya- ^c rif-na

In general, the subjunctive mood is determined by an attitude toward the verbal action such as volition, intent, purpose, doubt, attempting, expectation, permission, hope, ability, or necessity. In Arabic, the subjunctive is also syntactically determined by the presence of particular 'subjunctivizing' particles. Those particles include *lan* لَنْ, which negates the future; a series of particles that express purpose (*li-* لِ, *kay* كَيْ, *li-kay* لِكَيْ, *Hattaa* حَتَّى), and the subordinating conjunction particle ^aan, which links a subordinate clause to a main clause. The subjunctive mood may also occur in the passive voice.

2.1 Negative particle: *lan* لَنْ 'will not; shall not'

After the negative particle *lan* the subjunctive is used. This combination of *lan* + subjunctive yields a future negative.

⁴ For the history and development of the Arabic subjunctive, see Testen 1994.

لَنْ يَمْنَعُوهُمْ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونُوا عَرَبًا.

lan ya-mna^c-uu-hum min ʾan ya-kuun-uu ʿarab-an.

They will not prevent them from being Arabs.

لَنْ نَنْسَى.

lan na-nsaa.

We will not forget.

2.2 Particles of purpose

These particles are subordinating conjunctions that denote the sense of 'in order to' or 'in order that.' With certain particles a verbal noun may be substituted for the subjunctive verb.

2.2.1 *li-* لـ 'for; to; in order to, in order that'

The purpose particle *li-* لـ may be followed by a verb in the subjunctive, or by a verbal noun in the genitive case.

2.2.1.1 WITH SUBJUNCTIVE

لَأَخْذَهُ فِي نَزْهَةٍ

li-ʾaaxudh-a-hu fii nuzhat-in

in order that I take him for a walk

لِيَنْغَلِقُوا دَاخِلَ الْحُدُودِ

li-ya-nghaliq-uu daaxil-a l-Huduud-i

in order that they be closed inside
the borders

2.2.1.2 WITH VERBAL NOUN

لِلدِّفَاعِ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ

li-l-difaa^c-i ʿan nafs-i-hi

in order to defend himself

2.2.2 *kay* كَيْ 'in order that, in order to'

كَيْ نَسْتَعِدَّ لِلَامْتِحَانِ

kay na-staʿidd-a li-l-imtiHaan-i

in order for us to get ready for the exam

2.2.3 *kay laa* لَا كَيْ 'in order not to'

كَيْ لَا أَقُولَ . . .

kay laa ʾa-quul-a . . .

in order that I not say . . .

كَيْ لَا يَبْقَى قَوِيًّا

kay laa ya-bqaa qawiyy-an

so that it not remain strong

2.2.4 *li-kay* لِكَيْ 'in order to; in order that'

لِكَيْ يَعُودَ إِلَى بِلَادِهِ

li-kay ya-ʿuud-a ʾilaa bilaad-i-hi

in order to return to his country

لِكَيْ يَحَافِظَ عَلَى مَوْقِعِهِ

li-kay yu-HaafiZ-a ʿalaa mawqi^c-i-hi

in order to maintain his position

لكي يَغَيِّرُوا العالمَ

li-kay yu-ghayyir-uu l-ʿaalam-a

in order to change ('that they change') the world

2.2.5 *li-kay-laa* لَكَيْلَا 'in order not to'

لكيلا تدخلَ المكتبَ

li-kay-laa ta-dxul-a l-maktab-a

in order that she not enter the office

2.2.6 *Hattaa* حَتَّى 'in order that'

The particle *Hattaa* has other meanings, as well ('until' or 'even'), but when used with a verb in the subjunctive it indicates purpose.

حَتَّى ندركَ صعوبةَ هذا العملِ

Hattaa nu-drik-a Suʿuubat-a haadhaa l-ʿamal-i

in order that we realize the difficulty of this work

2.2.7 *Hattaa laa* لَا حَتَّى 'in order not to; so that . . . not'

حَتَّى لَا يَشْطُطَ فِي تَأْيِيدِ الانسحابِ

Hattaa laa ya-shuTT-a fii taʿyiid-i l-insiHaab-i

so that it does not go too far in supporting withdrawal

2.3 Subordinating conjunction: ʾan أَنْ + subjunctive

The particle /ʾan/ أَنْ follows certain types of verbs in order to conjoin a complement clause to the verb. These verbs (sometimes called "matrix" verbs) usually denote attitudes or feelings toward the action such as liking, disliking, expecting, deciding, intending, wanting, wishing, requesting, possibility, attempting, needing.⁵ For example:

to like, love	ʾaHabb-a ʾan	أَحَبُّ أَنْ	to be possible	ʾamkan-a ʾan	أَمَكْنَ أَنْ
to decide	qarrar-a ʾan	قَرَّرَ أَنْ	to be able	istaTaaʿ-a ʾan	إِسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ
to want	ʾaraad-a ʾan	أَرَادَ أَنْ	to be able	qadar-a ʾan	قَدَرَ أَنْ
to be on the verge of	ʾawshak-a ʾan	أَوْشَكَ أَنْ	to be able	tamakkan-a min ʾan	تَمَكَّنَ مِنْ أَنْ
to try to	Haawal-a ʾan	حَاوَلَ أَنْ	to intend	qaSad-a ʾan	قَصَدَ أَنْ

⁵ Cantarino states: "after verbs that present their objects as something striven for or simply as a possibility or capability of a future action, only ʾan will be used" (1975, III:107). See his extensive section on ʾan 1975, III: 107–16. Compare these verbs to verbs followed by the particle ʾanna, which is used to report factual information in a subordinate clause (see Chapter 19, section 2.3).

In most cases, the *ʿan* أَنْ + **subjunctive** structure is replaceable with a verbal noun. Thus it is possible to have sentences such as:

نحبُّ أَنْ نَقْرَأَ.

nu-Hibb-u ʿan na-qraʿ-a.

We like **to read** (lit. ‘we like that we read’).⁶

or

نحبُّ القِراءةَ.

nu-Hibb-u l-qiraaʿat-a.

We like **to read** (lit. ‘we like reading’).

Sentences in English may use the infinitive (e.g., “to read”) as the equivalent of either structure. For example:

لا نريدُ أَنْ ننسى.

laa nu-riid-u ʿan na-nsaa.

We don’t want to forget (‘that we forget’).

نستطيعُ أَنْ نفعلهَ.

na-staTiiʿ-u ʿan na-fʿal-a-hu.

We are able to do it (‘we are able that we do it’).

ثمَّ طلبتُ أَنْ يكونَ الموعدُ بعدَ غدٍ.

thumm-a Talab-at ʿan ya-kuun-a l-mawʿid-u baʿd-a ghad-in.

Then it requested that the appointment **be** [the day] after tomorrow.

2.3.1 *qabl-a ʿan* قبل أَنْ ‘before’ and *baʿd-a ʿan* بعد أَنْ ‘after’

The particle *ʿan* also follows certain semi-prepositions so that they may be followed by a verb phrase or entire clause.⁷

2.3.1.1 *qabl-a ʿan* قبل أَنْ ‘BEFORE’: The semi-preposition *qabl-a* قبل by itself must be directly followed by a noun or a pronoun suffix. Using *ʿan* as a buffer, *qabl-a* may be followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood. Tense is inferred from context.

(1) Present tense meaning:

قبل أَنْ نفكّرَ بذلك

qabl-a ʿan nu-fakkir-a bi-dhaalika

before we think of that

قبل أَنْ تمزّقَه الحرب

qabl-a ʿan tu-mazziq-a-hu l-Harb-u

before war rips it apart

⁶ For more detailed description of the use of the verbal noun in such structures, see Chapter 5, section 1.3.

⁷ Normally, prepositions and semi-prepositions are followed by a noun in the genitive case or by a pronoun.

(2) Past tense meaning:

قال ذلك قبل أن يخفف العقوبة.

qaal-a dhaalika qabl-a 'an yu-xaffif-a l-'uquubat-a.

He said that before he lightened the penalty.

2.3.1.2 *ba'd-a 'an* 'بعد أن 'AFTER': The phrase *ba'd-a 'an* 'بعد أن may be followed either by a verb in the subjunctive mood or by a past tense verb. It requires a verb in the subjunctive if the situation is not yet an actual fact, that is, if the situation is in the future or is still a possibility.

However, if the situation is in the past and has already taken place, *ba'd-a 'an* 'بعد أن is followed by a past tense verb. The latter case is one of the few situations where the particle *'an* 'أن is followed by anything other than a subjunctive.⁸

(1) Describing the past:

بعد أن اتَّهمهم بالتآمر

ba'd-a 'an-i ttaham-a-hum bi-l-ta'aamur-i

after he accused them of conspiracy

(2) Discussing the future:

سنأكل بعد أن ندرس.

sa-na-'kul-u ba'd-a 'an na-drus-a.

We will eat after we study.

2.3.2 Impersonal verbs + subjunctive

Certain impersonal verbal expressions followed by *'an* 'أن plus a verb in the subjunctive indicate necessity or possibility:

it is necessary that	<i>ya-jib-u 'an</i> ⁹	يجب أن
it ought to be that	<i>ya-nbaghii 'an</i>	ينبغي أن
it is possible that	<i>yu-mkin-u 'an</i>	يمكن أن
	<i>min-a l-mumkin-i 'an</i>	من الممكن أن

⁸ Al-Warraki and Hassanein (1994, 51) state it clearly: "If *ba'd-a 'an* is preceded by a perfect [verb] in the main clause, it is also followed by a perfect; if it is preceded by imperfect or future in the main clause, it is followed by a subjunctive." They devote an entire chapter to *ba'd-a 'an* and *qabl-a 'an*.

⁹ The phrase *ya-jib-u 'an* may include the use of the preposition *'alaa* to specify for whom the action is necessary, e.g., *ya-jib-u 'alay-naa 'an nu-faawid-a* 'يجب علينا أن نفاوض' 'We have to negotiate (it is necessary/ incumbent upon us that we negotiate)'.

يمكن أن تتحوّل إلى فخّ.

yu-mkin-u 'an ta-taHawwal-a 'ilaa faxx-in.

It could turn into a trap.

يجب أن نقوم بزيارة.

ya-jib-u 'an na-quum-a bi-ziyaarat-in.

It is necessary that we undertake
a visit.

يجب على الولايات المتحدة أن تدعم الاتفاق.

ya-jib-u 'alaa l-wilaayaat-i l-muttaHidat-i 'an ta-d'am-a l-ittifaaq-a.

It is necessary for the US to support the agreement.

وينبغي أن يصبح جزءاً لا يتجزأ من سياستهم.

ya-nbaghii 'an yu-SbiH-a juz'an laa ya-tajazza'u min siyaasat-i-him.

It ought to become an indivisible part of their policy.

2.3.2.1 NEGATION OF NECESSITY involves prefixing the negative particle *laa* before the verb of necessity:

ألا يجب علينا أن ندافع عن أنفسنا؟

'a-laa ya-jib-u 'alay-naa 'an nu-daafi-a 'an 'anfusi-naa?

Isn't it necessary ('for us') that we defend ourselves?

2.3.2.2 NEGATION OF ACTION involves prefixing the negative particle *laa* before the subjunctive verb. Sometimes *'an + laa* لا أن is contracted into one word: *'allaa* ألا:

ينبغي أن لا يشعر بقلق.

ya-nbaghii 'an laa ya-sh'ar-a bi-qalaq-in

He must not feel anxious.

يجب أن لا تدفع نقداً.

ya-jib-u 'an laa tu-dfa-a naqd-an.

It must not be paid in cash.

يجب ألا يغض النظر عنه.

ya-jib-u 'allaa ya-ghiDD-a l-naZar-a 'an-hu.

It is necessary that he not disregard it.

2.3.2.3 PAST TENSE OF IMPERSONAL VERBS: These impersonal verbs are put into the past tense through the use of the past tense verb *kaan-a* as an auxiliary verb:

[أراض] كان يجب أن تكون ضمن حصّتهم

[ʔaraaDin] kaan-a ya-jib-u 'an ta-kuun-a Dimn-a HiSSat-i-him

[lands which] should have been [included] within their portion

2.3.3 *'alaa + 'an* على أن + subjunctive

The preposition *'alaa* may indicate necessity or incumbence "upon" someone to do something. It may be used with a pronoun suffix or with a noun in the genitive, followed by *'an* and a verb in the subjunctive.

وعليّنا أن نبدأ من الصفر.

wa-‘alay-naa ‘an na-bda’-a min-a l-Sifr-i.

We must begin from zero.

وعلى الدولة أن تقوم بدورها.

wa-‘alaa l-dawlat-i ‘an ta-quum-a

bi-dawr-i-haa.

It is incumbent upon the state

to assume its role.

2.3.4 Adjective + *‘an* أن + subjunctive

The particle *‘an* may be used with an adjective or participle used to express a feeling, expectation, or opinion.

طبيعيّ جداً أن نحبّ بلادنا.

Tabii‘iyy-un jidd-an ‘an nu-Hibb-a bilaad-a-naa.

[It is] very natural that we love our country.

المستغرب أن نتأخّر.

al-mustaghrab-u ‘an na-ta’axxar-a.

[It is] strange that we delay.

ومن المقرّر أن يفجّر خبراء المفرقات القنابل.

wa-min-a l-muqarrar-i ‘an yu-fajjir-a xubaraa’-u l-mufarqi‘aat-i l-qanaabil-a.

It has been determined that explosives experts will detonate the bombs.

Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative

1 The jussive: *al-jazm* الجزم

The jussive mood is restricted in occurrence. It does not carry a particular semantic content; rather, it is a mood of the verb required in written Arabic under specific circumstances. The distinctive feature of jussive inflection is the absence of a final short inflectional vowel. Where the indicative mood inflects with *Damma* and the subjunctive mood inflects with *fatHa*, the jussive mood inflects with *sukuun*.

Like the subjunctive, the jussive shortens the longer verb suffixes, such as */-uuna/*, */-iina/*, and */-aani/*, by deleting the *nuun* and its short vowel, so those suffixes are left as long vowels */-uu/*, */-ii/*, */-aa/*. Again, as with the subjunctive and indicative, the */-na/* of the second and third persons feminine plural is retained.

1.1 Jussive mood paradigm: sound Form I verb

- عَرَفَ - 'rif - 'know'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَعْرِفْ <i>ʾa-^ʿrif</i>		نَعْرِفْ <i>na-^ʿrif</i>
Second person m.	تَعْرِفْ <i>ta-^ʿrif</i>	تَعْرِفَا <i>ta-^ʿrif-aa</i>	تَعْرِفُوا <i>ta-^ʿrif-uu</i>
f.	تَعْرِفِي <i>ta-^ʿrif-ii</i>	تَعْرِفَا <i>ta-^ʿrif-aa</i>	تَعْرِفْنَ <i>ta-^ʿrif-na</i>
Third person m.	يَعْرِفْ <i>ya-^ʿrif</i>	يَعْرِفَا <i>ya-^ʿrif-aa</i>	يَعْرِفُوا <i>ya-^ʿrif-uu</i>
f.	تَعْرِفْ <i>ta-^ʿrif</i>	تَعْرِفَا <i>ta-^ʿrif-aa</i>	يَعْرِفْنَ <i>ya-^ʿrif-na</i>

The absence of an inflectional vowel in the first person singular and plural, the second person masculine singular and the third persons feminine and masculine singular causes certain pronunciation and spelling changes in geminate, hollow, and defective verbs.

1.2 Jussive mood paradigm: geminate Form I verb

When the jussive mood is used with geminate verbs, the deletion of the inflectional short vowel in the first person singular and plural, the second person masculine singular, and the third persons feminine and masculine singular causes a consonant cluster to occur at the end of the inflected verb, and this violates the phonological rule against word-final consonant clusters in MSA. To counteract this, a short vowel /-a/ is added to these persons of the verb in order to make them pronounceable. However, the addition of the short vowel /-a/ has the effect of making the jussive of geminate verbs look exactly like the subjunctive.

رد - <i>rudd</i> - 'return; reply'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أرد <i>'a-rudd-a</i>		نرد <i>na-rudd-a</i>
Second person m.	ترد <i>ta-rudd-a</i>	تردا <i>ta-rudd-aa</i>	تردوا <i>ta-rudd-uu</i>
f.	تردي <i>ta-rudd-ii</i>	تردا <i>ta-rudd-aa</i>	ترددن <i>ta-rdud-na</i>
Third person m.	يرد <i>ya-rudd-a</i>	يردا <i>ya-rudd-aa</i>	يردوا <i>ya-rudd-uu</i>
f.	ترد <i>ta-rudd-a</i>	تردا <i>ta-rudd-aa</i>	يرددن <i>ya-rdud-na</i>

1.3 Jussive mood paradigm: hollow Form I verb

Hollow verbs inflected in the jussive mood have both a long vowel stem and a short vowel stem. The long vowel stem is only used when the inflectional suffix is a vowel, as follows:

1.3.1 Hollow-waaw verb

-qul / quul - 'say'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَقُلُّ ʾa-qul		نَقُلُّ na-qul
Second person m.	تَقُلُّ ta-qul	تَقُولَا ta-quul-aa	تَقُولُوا ta-quul-uu
f.	تَقُولِي ta-quul-ii	تَقُولَا ta-quul-aa	تَقُلْنَ ta-qul-na
Third person m.	يَقُلُّ ya-qul	يَقُولَا ya-quul-aa	يَقُولُوا ya-quul-uu
f.	تَقُلُّ ta-qul	تَقُولَا ta-quul-aa	يَقُلْنَ ya-qul-na

1.3.2 Hollow yaaʾ verb

- bi ^c - / - bii ^c - 'buy'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَبْعُ ʾa-bi ^c		نَبْعُ na-bi ^c
Second person m.	تَبْعُ ta-bi ^c	تَبِيعَا ta-bii ^c -aa	تَبِيعُوا ta-bii ^c -uu
f.	تَبِيعِي ta-bii ^c -ii	تَبِيعَا ta-bii ^c -aa	تَبِيعْنَ ta-bi ^c -na
Third person m.	يَبْعُ ya-bi ^c	يَبِيعَا ya-bii ^c -aa	يَبِيعُوا ya-bii ^c -uu
f.	تَبْعُ ta-bi ^c	تَبِيعَا ta-bii ^c -aa	يَبِيعْنَ ya-bi ^c -na

1.3.3 Hollow *ʾalif* verb

-nam- / -naam- 'sleep'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَنَّمْ <i>ʾa-nam</i>		نَنَّمْ <i>na-nam</i>
Second person m.	تَنَّمْ <i>ta-nam</i>	تَنَامَا <i>ta-naam-aa</i>	تَنَامُوا <i>ta-naam-uu</i>
f.	تَنَامِي <i>ta-naam-ii</i>	تَنَامَا <i>ta-naam-aa</i>	تَنَمَّنْ <i>ta-nam-na</i>
Third person m.	يَنَّمْ <i>ya-nam</i>	يَنَامَا <i>ya-naam-aa</i>	يَنَامُوا <i>ya-naam-uu</i>
f.	تَنَّمْ <i>ta-nam</i>	تَنَامَا <i>ta-naam-aa</i>	يَنَمَّنْ <i>ya-nam-na</i>

1.4 Jussive mood paradigm: Defective Form I verb

The effect of the *sukuun* of the jussive on certain inflectional forms of defective verbs is to shorten the long vowel ending to a short vowel. As a short vowel it usually does not appear in written text.

1.4.1 Jussive of *yaaʾ*-defective verb (-aa/-ii)

-bni- / -bniy- 'build'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَبْنِ <i>ʾa-bni</i>		نَبْنِ <i>na-bni</i>
Second person m.	تَبْنِ <i>ta-bni</i>	تَبْنِيَا <i>ta-bniy-aa</i>	تَبْنُوا <i>ta-bnuu</i>
f.	تَبْنِي <i>ta-bn-ii</i>	تَبْنِيَا <i>ta-bniy-aa</i>	تَبْنِينَ <i>ta-bnii-na</i>

- bni- / -bniy- 'build'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
Third person m.	يَبْنِي <i>ya-bni</i>	يَبْنِيَانِ <i>ya-bniy-aa</i>	يَبْنُونَا <i>ya-bnuu</i>
f.	تَبْنِي <i>ta-bni</i>	تَبْنِيَانِ <i>ta-bniy-aa</i>	يَبْنِينَ <i>ya-bnii-na</i>

1.4.2 Jussive of *yaa*³-defective verb (-ii/-aa)

-nsa- / -nsay- 'forget'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أَنْسَ <i>ʾa-nsa</i>		نَنْسَ <i>na-nsa</i>
Second person m.	تَنْسَ <i>ta-nsa</i>	تَنْسَيَا <i>ta-nsay-aa</i>	تَنْسَوْا <i>ta-nsaw</i>
f.	تَنْسِي <i>ta-nsay</i>	تَنْسَيَا <i>ta-nsay-aa</i>	تَنْسِينَ <i>ta-nsay-na</i>
Third person m.	يَنْسَ <i>ya-nsa</i>	يَنْسَيَا <i>ya-nsay-aa</i>	يَنْسَوْا <i>ya-nsaw</i>
f.	تَنْسَ <i>ta-nsa</i>	تَنْسَيَا <i>ta-nsay-aa</i>	يَنْسِينَ <i>ya-nsay-na</i>

1.4.3 Jussive of *waaw*-defective verb

-bdu- / -bduw- 'seem, appear'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	أُبْدُ <i>ʾa-bdu</i>		نُبْدُ <i>na-bdu</i>

-bdu- / -bduw- 'seem, appear'			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
Second person			
m.	تَبْدُ <i>ta-bdu</i>	تَبْدُوا <i>ta-bduw-aa</i>	تَبْدُوا <i>ta-bduu</i>
f.	تَبْدِي <i>ta-bdii</i>	تَبْدُوا <i>ta-bduw-aa</i>	تَبْدُونَ <i>ta-bduu-na</i>
Third person			
m.	يَبْدُ <i>ya-bdu</i>	يَبْدُوا <i>ya-bduw-aa</i>	يَبْدُوا <i>ya-bduu</i>
f.	تَبْدُ <i>ta-bdu</i>	تَبْدُوا <i>ta-bduw-aa</i>	يَبْدُونَ <i>ya-bduu-na</i>

Full paradigms of verbs in all moods are found in chapters on the respective verb forms (I–X).

1.5 Use of the jussive

The jussive is used in essentially five ways: with conditional sentences, with the negative particle *lam* لَمْ; with the negative imperative particle *laa* لَا, the indirect imperative particle *li* لِ, and as a basis for forming the imperative.

Most often, the jussive mood in MSA is used with the negative particle *lam* to negate the past tense, and with the imperative.

1.5.1 In conditional sentences

The jussive in conditional sentences occurred rarely in the MSA database covered for this analysis. This particular function of the jussive is more common in literary and classical texts.¹ For discussion of this use of the jussive see Chapter 39 on conditional and optative expressions.

إِنْ تَذْهَبِ، أَذْهَبُ مَعَكَ.

^o*in ta-dhhab-ii*, ^a*a-dhhab ma^c-a-ki*.

If you (f.) go, I'll go with you.

¹ See, for example, Cantarino's extensive description of conditional clauses in literary Arabic, Cantarino 1975, III:311–71, and Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 290–300.

إِنْ يَكْسِرُ إِنْسَانٌ سِنَّ آخَرَ، فَسِنَّهُ تُكْسَرُ.

ⁱⁿ ya-ksir ^{insa}an-un sinn-a ^{aaxar}-a, fa-sinn-u-hu tu-ksar-u.²

If a person breaks the tooth of another, (then) his tooth shall be broken.

1.5.2 With *lam* لم

The negative particle *lam* is used to negate the past tense. However, it is not used with a past tense verb. Instead, it is used with the jussive form of the verb, conveying a meaning of past tense. In Arabic grammatical terms it is said to “transform the [meaning of] the verb following it to the past.”³

لَمْ نَأْتِ.

lam na-ʔti.

We did not come.

لَمْ تَنْجَحْ حَتَّى الْآنَ.

lam ta-njaH Hattaa l-ʔaan-a

She has not yet succeeded.

لَمْ أُنَمْ.

lam ʔa-nam.

I didn't sleep.

إِصْلَاحَاتٌ لَمْ تَكْتَمَلْ مِنْذُ عَامَيْنِ

^{ʔi}SlaaH-aat-un *lam ta-ktamil mundh-u*

^{ʔaam}-ayni

renovations that haven't been completed
in two years

لَمْ تَكُنْ تَدْفَعُ الْإِيجَارَ.

lam ta-kun ta-dfaʕ-u l-ʔiijaar-a.

She didn't used to pay the rent.

لَمْ يُبْلِغُوا زَمَلَاءَهُمْ.

lam yu-bligh-u uumalaaʔ-a-hum.

They did not notify their colleagues.

For further examples of *lam* لم plus the jussive, see Chapter 37 on negation and exception, section 2.2.1.

2 The imperative: *al-ʔamr* الأمر

The imperative or command form of the verb in Arabic is based upon the imperfect/present tense verb in the jussive mood. It occurs in the second person (all forms of “you”), for the most part, although it occasionally occurs in the first person plural (“let’s”) and the third person (“let him/her/them”).

2.1 To form the imperative

The general rule for forming the imperative is to take the second person form of the jussive verb and remove the subject marker (the *ta-* or *tu-* prefix). If the remaining

² From Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 160.

³ ‘Abd al-Latif et al. 1997, 307: “*wa-ta-dull-u [lam] ʔalaa l-nafii, wa-tu-qallib-u l-muDaariʕ-a baʕd-a-haa ʔilaa l-maaDii wa-li-dhaalik-a yu-Tliq-u ʔalay-haa l-muʕrib-uuna*: “Harfu nafii wa-jazm-in wa-qalb-in.” [The particle] *lam* indicates negation, and it transforms the present-tense verb after it into the past tense and therefore grammarians call it the particle of negation, jussive, and transformation.”

verb stem starts with a consonant-vowel (CV) sequence, then the stem is left as it is because it is easily pronounceable. If the remaining stem starts with a consonant cluster, then it needs a helping vowel prefix. The nature of the helping vowel depends on the verb form and (in Form I) the nature of the stem vowel.

For example, the verb *katab-a* 'to write' in the **present tense, jussive mood, second person** is:

you (m. sg.) write	<i>ta-ktub</i>	تَكْتُبْ
you (f. sg.) write	<i>ta-ktub-ii</i>	تَكْتُبِي
you two write	<i>ta-ktub-aa</i>	تَكْتُبَا
you (m. pl.) write	<i>ta-ktub-uu</i>	تَكْتُبُوا
you (f. pl.) write	<i>ta-ktub-na</i>	تَكْتُبْنَ

To create the imperative, the *ta-* prefix is dropped, leaving:

* <i>ktub</i>	كْتُبْ
* <i>ktub-ii</i>	كْتُبِي
* <i>ktub-aa</i>	كْتُبَا
* <i>ktub-uu</i>	كْتُبُوا
* <i>ktub-na</i>	كْتُبْنَ

Because these forms start with consonant clusters, they violate a phonological rule in Arabic that prohibits word-initial consonant clusters. They therefore need a helping vowel to be pronounceable. The helping vowel selected in this case is /u/ because the stem vowel of the verb is /u/. However, another rule in Arabic prohibits words from starting with vowels, so the /u/ vowel is preceded by *hamza*, and the *hamza* plus short vowel sit on an ^ʾ*alif* seat. This yields the pronounceable forms:

Write!	<i>u-ktub!</i>	اَكْتُبْ
	<i>u-ktub-ii!</i>	اَكْتُبِي
	<i>u-ktub-aa!</i>	اَكْتُبَا
	<i>u-ktub-uu!</i>	اَكْتُبُوا
	<i>u-ktub-na!</i>	اَكْتُبْنَ

This helping vowel is used with *hamzat al-waSl*, that is, elidable *hamza*, which is normally not written and drops out if it is preceded by another vowel, as in:

Read and write!	<i>i-graʾ wa-ktub!</i>	اقْرَأْ وَ اَكْتُبْ !
-----------------	------------------------	-----------------------

Note that although the prefix *hamza* drops out in pronunciation, the ^ʾ*alif* seat remains in the spelling of the word.

The deletion of the subject-marker prefix (*ta-* or *tu-*) does not always leave a stem that starts with two consonants. For example, in the Form II verb *fassar-a* فَسَّرَ 'to explain':

you (m. sg.) explain	<i>tu-fassir</i>	تَفْسِّرُ
you (f. sg.) explain	<i>tu-fassir-ii</i>	تَفْسِّرِي
you two explain	<i>tu-fassir-aa</i>	تَفْسِّرَا
you (m. pl.) explain	<i>tu-fassir-uu</i>	تَفْسِّرُوا
you (f. pl.) explain	<i>tu-fassir-na</i>	تَفْسِّرْنَ

The imperative forms stripped of the subject marker are:

Explain!	<i>fassir!</i>	فَسِّرْ!
	<i>fassir-ii!</i>	فَسِّرِي!
	<i>fassir-aa!</i>	فَسِّرَا!
	<i>fassir-uu!</i>	فَسِّرُوا!
	<i>fassir-na!</i>	فَسِّرْنَ!

These are pronounceable just as they are, so they need no initial helping vowel and are left as they are in the imperative.

2.1.1 Summary

The word-initial helping vowel is needed in the imperative of Forms I, IV, VII, VIII, and X of the verb. Forms II, III, V, and VI do not need helping vowels in the imperative. The specifics of the Forms are summarized here.

2.2 Form I imperatives

Form I imperatives usually require initial helping vowels, either /i/ or /u/. The nature of the helping vowel is determined by the stem vowel of the present tense. If the stem vowel is *fatHa* or *kasra*, the helping vowel is *kasra*; if the stem vowel is *Damma*, the helping vowel is *Damma*.

2.2.1 Sound verbs

2.2.1.1 STEM VOWEL *fatHa*

افْتَحْ يَا سَمْسَم!	ارْفَعْ يَدَيْكَ!	اسْمَحْ لِي.
<i>i-ftaH yaa simsim-u!</i>	<i>i-rfa^c yad-ay-ka!</i>	<i>i-smaH-ii lii!</i>
Open, Sesame!	Raise your (two) hands!	Permit (f. sg.) me!

2.2.1.2 STEM VOWEL *kasra*

احْفَرْ هُنَا!	اعْذِرْنِي.
<i>i-Hfir hūnaa!</i>	<i>i-°dhir-nii.</i>
Dig here!	Forgive me/Excuse me.

2.2.1.3 STEM VOWEL *Damma*

ادْخُلْ!	انْظُرْ جَيِّدًا!
<i>u-dxul!</i>	<i>u-nZur jayyid-an!</i>
Enter!	Look well/ look closely!

2.2.2 Hamzated verbs

Form I verbs with **initial hamza** tend to drop the *hamza* entirely in the imperative in order to avoid less acceptable phonological sequences that involve two *hamzas* in sequence such as *°u° kul or *°u°xudh:

كُلْ الجزر.	خُذْ هَذِهِ!
<i>kul-i l-jazar-a.</i>	<i>xudh haadhihi!</i>
Eat the carrots.	Take this!

Verbs with **medial hamza** may behave as regular verbs or may drop the initial *hamza*:

سَلْ! ~ اسْأَلْ!	اسْأَلْ عَنْ مَعْنَى أَيِّ كَلِمَةٍ.
<i>i-s°al! ~ sal!</i>	<i>is°al °an ma°naa °ayy-i kalimat-in.</i>
Ask!	Ask about the meaning of any word.

Verbs with **final hamza** behave regularly in the imperative:

اقْرَأْ!	ابْدَأْ!
<i>i-qra°!</i>	<i>i-bda°-ii!</i>
Read!	Begin(f. sg.)!

2.2.3 Geminate verbs

Form I geminate verbs are mixed as to whether or not they take a helping vowel prefix. They do not take the *hamza* prefix in the forms that end with a long vowel, but they may or may not take the *hamza* in the second person masculine singular. If the *hamza* is omitted, the imperative in this person takes a final *fatHa* in order for it to be pronounceable. A *hamza* prefix is used in the second person feminine plural.

Respond!	<i>rudd-a ~ u-rdud!</i>	ارْدُدْ ~ رُدْ
	<i>rudd-ii</i>	رُدِّي
	<i>rudd-aa</i>	رُدَّا

<i>rudd-uu</i>	رُدُّوا
<i>u-rdud-na!</i>	ارْدُدْنَ

2.2.4 Assimilated verbs

Most verbs whose initial root consonant is *waaw* or *yaa*⁹ (such as *waDa^c-a/ ya-Da^c-u* ‘to put, place’) delete that consonant in all moods of the present tense. Therefore when the subject prefix is deleted from the jussive mood in order to form the imperative, it leaves a very short but pronounceable stem. For example:

Put!	<i>Da^c !</i>	ضَعْ !
	<i>Da^c-ii!</i>	ضَعِي !
	<i>Da^c-aa!</i>	ضَعَا !
	<i>Da^c-uu!</i>	ضَعُوا !
	<i>Da^c-na!</i>	ضَعْنَ !
	<i>Da^c-haa fii kitaab-i-ka.</i>	من فضلك قف.
Put it in your book.		<i>min faDl-i-ka qif.</i>
		Please stop.

2.2.5 Hollow verbs

Form I hollow verbs, just as regular verbs, make the imperative based on the jussive forms without the subject-marker prefix. There are two stem variants in the jussive of hollow verbs, short-vowel and long-vowel. Both stems are pronounceable without the need for a helping vowel prefix. For example:

2.2.5.1 HOLLOW *waaw* VERB: *qaal-a* قَالَ / *ya-quul-u* يَقُولُ ‘TO SAY’

Say!	<i>qul!</i>	قُلْ !
	<i>quul-ii!</i>	قُولِي !
	<i>quul-aa!</i>	قُولَا !
	<i>quul-uu!</i>	قُولُوا !
	<i>qul-na!</i>	قُلْنَ !

2.2.5.2 HOLLOW *yaa*⁹ VERB: *baa^c-a* بَاعَ / *ya-bii^c-u* يَبِيعُ ‘TO SELL’

Sell!	<i>bi^c !</i>	بِعْ !
	<i>bii^c-ii!</i>	بِيعِي !

bii^c-aa! *بيعا!*

bii^c-uu! *بيعوا!*

bi^c-na! *يَعْنَ!*

سيروا بمحاذاة السور.

siir-uu bi-muHaadhaat-i l-suur-i.

Go (m. pl.) alongside the wall.

2.2.5.3 HOLLOW ^ʾalif VERB: *naam-a* نَامَ/*ya-naam-u* يَنَامُ 'TO SLEEP'

Sleep! *nam!* *نَمْ!*

naam-ii! *نامي!*

naam-aa! *ناما!*

naaam-uu! *ناموا!*

nam-na! *نَمَنَّ!*

2.2.6 Defective verbs

Defective verbs have either *waaw* or *yaa'* as their final root consonant. In the jussive mood, this consonant undergoes shifts in length and quality. The imperative of defectives is based on the jussive form, with no changes except the deletion of the subject marker and the addition of the helping vowel prefix. As with regular verbs, the nature of the short helping vowel prefix depends on the stem vowel of the verb.

2.2.6.1 *Yaa'*-DEFECTIVE VERBS: The *yaa'*-defective verbs are of two types: ones that end in *-aa* (^ʾ*alif maqSuura* أَلَفْ مَقْصُورَة) and ones that end with *yaa'* in the past tense. The ones ending in *-aa* usually inflect the present tense with *-ii*; the ones that end with *yaa'* in the past tense take *-aa* in the present tense. These verbs take *kasra* as their imperative prefix helping vowel.

(1) *-aa-ii/* verb: *ramaa* رَمَى/*ya-rmii* يَرْمِي 'to throw'

Throw! *i-rmi!* *ارْمِ!*

i-rm-ii! *ارمي!*

i-rmiy-aa! *ارميا!*

i-rm-uu! *ارموا!*

i-rmii-na! *ارمين!*

(2) /-ii-aa/ verb: *nasiy-a* نَسِيَ / *ya-nsaa* يَنْسَى 'to forget'

Forget!	<i>i-nsa!</i>	انْسَ!
	<i>i-ns-ay!</i>	انْسَي!
	<i>i-nsay-aa!</i>	انْسِيَا!
	<i>i-ns-aw!</i>	انْسُوا!
	<i>i-nsay-na!</i>	انْسَيْنَ!

2.2.6.2 Waaw-DEFECTIVE VERBS: The *waaw*-defective verbs end in *-aa* (*ʿalif Tawiila* ألف طويلة) in the past tense citation form, and in *waaw* in the present tense. In the jussive mood, the *waaw* shifts and sometimes shortens. The prefix helping vowel for these imperative forms is *Damma*.

(1) /-aa-uu/ verb: *shakaa* شَكَأ / *ya-shkuu* يَشْكُو 'to complain'

Complain!	<i>u-shku!</i>	اشْكُ!
	<i>u-shk-ii!</i>	اشْكِي!
	<i>u-shkuw-aa!</i>	اشْكُوا!
	<i>u-shk-uu!</i>	اشْكُوا!
	<i>u-shkuu-na!</i>	اشْكُون!

2.2.7 Doubly defective verbs

Doubly defective verbs have semi-consonants and/or *hamza* in two places, sometimes as the first and third consonants, and sometimes as the second and third. Their imperatives are defective in more ways than one. Two examples are given here, the verb *raʿaa* رَأَى / *ya-raa* يَرَى 'to see' and the verb *waʿaa* وَعَى / *ya-ʿii* يَعِي 'to heed, pay attention.'

2.2.7.1 IMPERATIVE OF *raʿaa* رَأَى / *ya-raa* يَرَى⁴

See!	<i>ra~ rah!</i>	رَه ~ رَ!
	<i>ray!</i>	رَي!
	<i>ray-aa!</i>	رِيَا!
	<i>raw!</i>	رَوَا!
	<i>ray-na!</i>	رَيْنَ!

⁴ Taken from Wright 1967, I:93. Note that the verb *raʿaa* is used primarily in written Arabic and is not normally used in the vernacular forms of the language.

2.2.7.2 IMPERATIVE OF *wa^caa* وَعَى / *ya^c-ii* يَعْى

Pay attention!	<i>^ci!</i>	ع !
	<i>^cii!</i>	عي !
	<i>^ciy-aa!</i>	عيا !
	<i>^c-uu!</i>	عوا !
	<i>^cii-na!</i>	عين !

2.2.8 Replacive imperative verb: *ta^caal* تَعَال 'come!'

The verb *jaa^aa* جاء / *ya^c-jii^a-u* يَجِيء 'to come' has a different form in the imperative, based on another root entirely:⁵

Come!	<i>ta^caal-a!</i>	تَعَال !
	<i>ta^caal-ay!</i>	تَعَالِي !
	<i>ta^caal-aa!</i>	تَعَالَا !
	<i>ta^caal-aw!</i>	تَعَالُوا !
	<i>ta^caalay-na!</i>	تَعَالَيْن !

تعال هنا !

ta^caal-a hunaa !

Come here!

2.3 Form II imperative

Form II imperatives do not require the addition of an initial helping vowel.

Examples include:

خَبِّرْنِي ! <i>xabbir-nii!</i>	فَكِّرْ فِيمَا تَأْكُلُهُ. <i>fakkir fii-maa ta^a-kul-u-hu.</i>
Tell me!	Think about what you eat.
سَلِّمْ لِي عَلَيْهِ. <i>sallim lii ^calay-hi.</i>	سَكِّرُوا كُتُبَكُمْ. <i>sakkir-uu kutub-a-kum.</i>
Greet him for me.	Close (m. pl.) your books.

2.4 Form III

Form III imperatives do not require the addition of an initial helping vowel.

Examples include:

⁵ Based on the Form VI defective verb *ta^caalaa/ya-ta^caalaa* 'to rise, ascend, be sublime.' For discussion of this "suppletive imperative" see Testen 1997.

قاطع البضائع اليابانية!
qaatI[°]-i l-baDaa[°]-a l-yaabaaniyyat-a!
 Boycott Japanese goods!

سارع إلى إغلاقها.
saari[°] ilaa[°] ighlaaq-i-haa.
 Hasten to turn it off.

حافظوا على نظافة مدينتكم.
HaafiZ-uu[°] alaa naZaafat-i
madiinat-i-kum!
 Preserve the cleanliness of your city!

شاركوني في الترحيب به.
shaarik-uu-nii[°] fii l-tarHiib-i bi-hi.
 Join me in welcoming him.

2.5 Form IV

Form IV verbs are prefixed by the vowel /a/ (*fatHa*) and a non-elidable *hamza* (*hamzat al-qaT[°]*):

أغلق يا سمسم!
°aghliq yaa simsim!
 Close, Sesame!

أجب عن سؤالي!
°ajib °an su°aal-ii!
 Answer my question!

أعطوني الواجبات.
°a[°]T-uu-nii l-waajibaat-i.
 Give (m. pl.) me the homework.

أعيدي السؤال.
°a[°]iid-ii l-su°aal-a.
 Repeat (f. sg.) the question.

2.6 Form V

Form V imperative verbs do not require a prefix vowel.

تفضل بالدخول.
tafaDDal bi-l-duxuul-i.
 Please come in.

تصور!
taSawwar!
 Imagine!

2.7 Form VI

Form VI imperative verbs do not require a prefix vowel.

تعاونوا!
ta°aawan-uu!
 Cooperate (m. pl.)!

2.8 Form VII

Form VII verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (*kasra*) and *hamzat al-waSl*.

انصرف من هنا.
inSarif min hunaa.
 Leave here.

2.9 Form VIII

Form VIII verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (*kasra*) and *hamzat al-waSl*.

ابتعدوا عن هنا!	انتظر دقيقة!
<i>ibtaʿid-uu ʿan hunaa!</i>	<i>intaZir daqiiqat-an!</i>
Get away (m. pl.) from here!	Wait a minute!

2.10 Form IX

This form is rarely used in the imperative.

2.11 Form X

Form X verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (*kasra*) and *hamzat al-waSl*.

استعمل هذا المفتاح.	استرح!	استعجل!
<i>istaʿmil haadhaa l-miftaaH-a.</i>	<i>istariH!</i>	<i>istaʿjil!</i>
Use this key.	Relax!	Hurry up!

2.12 Quadriliteral imperatives

Using the identical process of stripping the subject prefix from the second person jussive verb forms, one gets, for example, in the Form I quadriliteral verb *tarjam-a* 'to translate':

Base form jussive:

you (m. sg.) translate	<i>tu-tarjim</i>	تَرْجِمْ
you (f. sg.) translate	<i>tu-tarjim-ii</i>	تَرْجِمِي
you two translate	<i>tu-tarjim-aa</i>	تَرْجِمَا
you (m. pl.) translate	<i>tu-tarjim-uu</i>	تَرْجِمُوا
you (f. pl.) translate	<i>tu-tarjim-na</i>	تَرْجِمْنَ

The imperative forms stripped of the subject marker are:

Translate!	<i>tarjim!</i>	تَرْجِمْ!
	<i>tarjim-ii!</i>	تَرْجِمِي!
	<i>tarjim-aa!</i>	تَرْجِمَا!
	<i>tarjim-uu!</i>	تَرْجِمُوا!
	<i>tarjim-na!</i>	تَرْجِمْنَ!

These are pronounceable so they need no initial helping vowel and are left as they are in the imperative. Form I is by far the most frequent in usage, since the

quadriliteral Form II (for example, *tabalwar-a* تَبَلَّورَ 'to be crystallized') is often reflexive or passive in meaning.

تلفن لي غدا.	ترجمي هذه الجملة.
<i>talfin lii ghad-an.</i>	<i>tarjim-ii haadhihi l-jumlat-a.</i>
Phone me tomorrow.	Translate (f. sg.) this sentence.

3 The permissive or hortative imperative: *laam al-ʿamr* لام الأمر

An "indirect" type of imperative may be used to exhort or enjoin someone to do something. This may occur in the first (I, we) or third (he, she, they) persons. In this type of imperative structure, the jussive verb is used (no deletion of subject marker), preceded by the particle /li-/ لـ, implying the idea of permission or encouragement to do something:

لننظر في السلة.
li-na-nZur fii l-sallat-i.
 Let's look in the basket.

Sometimes the /li-/ لـ particle is preceded by the particle /fa-/ فـ, in which case the vowel is dropped from /li-/ making it just /l-/.

فلنذهب.	فلنسرع.
<i>fa-l-na-dhhab.</i>	<i>fa-l-na-sriʿ.</i>
(So) let's go.	Let's hurry.

4 The negative imperative: *laa* لا + jussive

The negative imperative is formed by using the negative particle *laa* plus the jussive form of the (second person) verb. Note that in the negative imperative, the jussive verb form preserves its prefix.

Don't go back!

m. sg.	<i>laa ta-rjiʿ!</i>	لا تَرْجِعْ!
f. sg.	<i>laa ta-rjiʿ-ii!</i>	لا تَرْجِعِي!
dual	<i>laa ta-rjiʿ-aa!</i>	لا تَرْجِعَا!
m. pl.	<i>laa ta-rjiʿ-uul!</i>	لا تَرْجِعُوا!
f. pl.	<i>laa ta-rjiʿ-na!</i>	لا تَرْجِعْنَ!

Examples:

لا تفتحي الشباك.	لا تنسَ!	لا تدخن.
<i>laa ta-ftaH-ii l-shubbaak-a.</i>	<i>laa ta-nsa!</i>	<i>laa tu-daxxin.</i>
Don't (f. sg.) open the window.	Don't forget!	Don't smoke.

لا تخافوا !

laa ta-xaaf-uu!

Don't (m. pl.) be afraid!

لا تنتظروا.

laa ta-ntaZir-uu.

Don't (m.pl.) wait.

لا تستعجل.

laa ta-sta^cjil.

Don't hurry.

لا تؤجل عمل اليوم إلى الغد.

laa tu-^ajjil ^camal-a l-yawm-i ^ailaa l-ghad-i.

Don't postpone today's work to tomorrow.

لا تزعج نفسك.

laa tu-z^cij nafs-a-ka.

Don't disturb yourself/don't bother.

Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (*kaan-a wa-³axawaat-u-haa*)

Verbs of being, becoming, and remaining have special status in Arabic. Because these verbs resemble each other in meaning and in syntactic effect, they are referred to as “sisters” of the verb ‘to be,’ *kaan-a* كان (³*axawaat-u kaan-a* أخوات كان). All of them describe states of existence (e.g., being, inception, duration, continuation) and each of them requires the accusative marker on the predicate or complement (*xabar kaan-a* خبر كان, e.g., *kaan-a za^ciim-an* كان زعيماً ‘He was a leader.’ The subject of *kaan-a* (*ism kaan-a* اسم كان) and her sisters, if mentioned specifically, is in the nominative case (e.g., *kaan-a l-rajul-u za^ciim-an*, كان الرجلُ زعيماً ‘The man was a leader.’¹

Another special characteristic of *kaan-a* and her sisters is that they function as auxiliary verbs. In particular, *kaan-a* is used for forming compound tenses such as past progressive and future perfect. Some examples of this are offered here, but the topic is presented in detail in Chapter 21.

Verbs of seeming or appearing also mark their complements with the accusative case, but they are not usually classified among the “sisters” of *kaan-a*.

1 The verb *kaan-a* كان /*ya-kuun-u* يَكُونُ ‘to be’

This verb is unusual in that it is not generally used in the present tense indicative. It is omitted from the syntax of a simple predication.

1.1 Omission of *kaan-a* in simple present tense predication

These verbless sentences are usually termed “equational” sentences in English descriptions of Arabic syntax; in Arabic they are called “nominal sentences” (*jumal ismiyya* جملة اسمية).² For more on equational sentences, see Chapter 4, section 2.

أنا متأكد.	هي محظوظة.
³ <i>anaa muta³akkid-un</i> .	<i>hiya maHZuuZat-un</i> .
I [am] certain.	She [is] fortunate.

¹ For more extensive discussion of *kaan-a wa-³axawaat-u-haa* in Classical Arabic, see Wright 1967, II:99–109.

² Arab grammarians actually term any sentence that starts with a noun a “nominal sentence” even if it includes a verb. Following the practice of Cantarino (1974, I:2), I use the terms “nominal sentence” and “equational sentence” as equivalents.

هو الملك.
huwa l-malik-u.
 He [is] the king.

هم متأخرون.
hum muta'axxir-uuna.
 They [are] late.

1.2 Use of *kaan-a* كَانَ

The verb *kaan-a* enters when the predication is anything but present tense indicative. It takes a subject in the nominative and it requires that the complement be in the accusative case.

1.2.1 Past tense

كُنْتُ متأكداً.
kun-tu muta'akkid-an.
 I was certain.

كَانَتْ محظوظةً.
kaan-at maHZuuZat-an.
 She was fortunate.

كانوا متأخرين.
kaan-uu muta'axxir-iina.
 They were late.

كَانَ الملك.
kaan-a l-malik-a.
 He was the king.

1.2.2 Future tense

سَأَكُونُ متأكداً.
sa-a-kuun-u muta'akkid-an.
 I will be certain.

سَتَكُونُ محظوظةً.
sa-ta-kuun-u maHZuuZat-an.
 She will be fortunate.

سَيَكُونُونَ متأخرين.
sa-ya-kuun-uuna muta'axxir-iina.
 They will be late.

سَيَكُونُ الملك.
sa-ya-kuun-u l-malik-a.
 He will be the king.

1.2.3 Further examples

Here are some examples of *kaan-a* in various tenses and moods:

1.2.3.1 PAST TENSE

كَانَ جاسوساً.
kaan-a jaasuus-an.
 He was a spy.

كَانَ كثيرون منهم مسجلين.
kaan-a kathiir-uuna min-hum musajjal-iina.
 Many of them were registered.

هذه كانت منازلنا.
haadhihi kaan-at manaazil-a-naa.
 These were our homes.

كَانَ مخزناً للتوابل.
kaan-a maxzan-an li-l-tawaabil-i.
 It was a storehouse for spices.

1.2.3.2 NEGATIVE PAST WITH *lam* لَمْ + JUSSIVE MOOD OF *kaan-a* كَانَ

يمكن القول إنَّ هذا الاجتماع لم يَكُنْ ضرورياً.

yu-mkin-u l-qawl-u 'inna haadhaa l-ijtimaa'a lam ya-kun Daruuriyy-an.

It could be said that this meeting **was not** necessary.

لم يَكُنْ حلمًا عاديًّا.

lam ya-kun Hulm-an 'aadiyy-an.

It **was not** a regular dream.

1.2.3.3 PAST TENSE FOR OPTATIVE/CONDITIONAL

كم كُنَّا سعداء!

kam kun-naa su'adaa'a !

How happy we **would be**!

1.2.3.4 FUTURE TENSE

لبنان سَيَكُونُ غائِباً عن القمة.

lubnaan-u sa-ya-kuun-u ghaa'ib-an 'an-i l-qimmat-i.

Lebanon **will be** absent from the summit [meeting].

1.2.3.5 SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

لا يمكن أن يَكُونَ عربيًّا.

laa yu-mkin-u 'an ya-kuun-a 'arabiyy-an.

It is not possible that he **is** an Arab.

1.3 The use of *kaan-a* as auxiliary verb

An important function of *kaan-a* is as an auxiliary verb in conjunction with main verbs to construct compound verb forms that convey different temporal meanings. Compound verbs are discussed at greater length in Chapter 21, section 2.

1.3.1 Past progressive

For habitual or continual action in the past, the past tense of *kaan-a* is used with the present tense of the main verb. Both the main verb and the auxiliary are inflected for person, number, and gender.

كُنَّا نأملُ

kun-naa na-'amal-u

we were hoping

أنا من عائلة كانتْ تعملُ في المدينة.

'anaa min 'aa'ilat-in kaan-at ta-'mal-u fii l-madiinat-i.

I am from a family that **used to** work in the city.

1.3.2 Pluperfect or past perfect

To express an action in the past that is over with and which serves as a background action for the present, the past tense of *kaan-a* is used with a past tense of the main verb. The particle *qad* قَدْ may be optionally inserted just before the main verb.

كانوا (قَدْ) عملوا معهم على إعادة فتح السفارة.
kaan-uu (qad) ʿamil-uu maʿ-a-hum ʿalaa ʾiʿaadat-i fatH-i l-sifaarat-i.
 They had worked with them on re-opening the embassy.

كان السفيرُ (قَدْ) وصلَ مساءَ الجمعةِ.
kaana l-safiir-u (qad) waSal-a masaaʾ-a l-jumʿat-i.
 The ambassador had arrived Friday evening.

كُنْتُ (قَدْ) أيدتُ وضع مصر على القائمةِ.
kun-tu (qad) ʾayyad-tu waDʿ-a miSr-a ʿalaa l-qaaʾimat-i.
 I had supported putting Egypt on the list.

2 The verb *lays-a* لَيْسَ 'to not be'

This irregular verb negates the present tense. It is discussed in detail in Chapter 37, section 1. It is noted here because it is a sister of *kaan-a* and requires a complement in the accusative case. Although it is inflected as a past tense verb, it conveys negation of the present tense.

هذا لَيْسَ صديقنا.	لَيْسَ محامياً.
<i>haadhaa lays-a Sadiiq-a-naa.</i>	<i>lays-a muHaamiy-an.</i>
This is not our friend.	He is not a lawyer.

3 Verbs of becoming: *baat-a* بات, *aSbaH-a* أَصْبَحَ, *Saar-a* صار

Verbs that indicate a change of state or condition are also sisters of *kaan-a*.

3.1 *baat-a* بات 'to become; come to be'

The verb *baat-a/ya-biit-u* indicates a change of state (or sometimes the continuation of a state) and is used chiefly in the past tense. It may be used as a main verb or as an auxiliary verb.

باتوا مقتنعين.	بات من الضروري.
<i>baat-uu muqtaniʿ-iina.</i>	<i>baat-a min-a l-Daruuriyy-i.</i>
They have become convinced.	It has become necessary.

باتت البلاد تُعرف به اليوم.
baat-at-i l-bilaad-u tu-ʿraf-u bi-hi l-yawm-a.
 The country has come to be known for it today.

3.2 *ʾaSbaH-a* /*yu-SbiH-u* أَصْبَحَ /يُصْبِحُ 'to become'

This is a Form IV verb that has an inceptive meaning: 'to start to be,' or 'to become.'

قد أَصْبَحَ أمراً ضرورياً.
qad ʾaSbaH-a ʾamr-an Daruuriyy-an.
 It has become an essential matter.

أَصْبَحَ همَّهم اليومي.
ʾaSbaH-a hamm-a-hum-u l-yawmiyy-a.
 It became their daily concern.

وسيُصْبِحُ جزءاً أكثر أهمية.
wa-sa-yu-SbiH-u juzʾ-an ʾakthar-a
ʾahammiyyat-an.

أَصْبَحَ مشكلةً.
ʾaSbaH-a mushkilat-an.
 It became a problem.

And it will become a more
 important part.

3.3 *Saar-a* /*ya-Siir-u* يَصِيرُ / صارَ 'to become; to come to be'

The verb *Saar-a* was not found to be very frequent in the material covered for this work. When used as the main verb it has the same meaning and effect as *ʾaSbaH-a*.

صارت ثقافتها أطلسية عالمية.
Saar-at thaqaafat-u-haa ʿaalamiiyyat-an.
 Its culture became global.

3.3.1 As an auxiliary verb

When used as an auxiliary verb, *Saar-a* denotes inception and continuation:

منذ الستينيات صارت تأخذ دوراً أكبر.
mundhu l-sittiinaat-i Saar-at ta-ʾxudh-u dawr-an ʾakbar-a.
 Since the sixties it has come to play a greater role.

3.3.2 *Saar li-*

When used with the preposition *li-* expressing possession, it conveys the idea of 'come to have' or 'come to possess':

صار الولاء للعثمانيين شكلياً.
Saar-a l-wilaaʾ-u li-l-ʿuthmaaniyy-iina shakliyy-an.

The Ottomans came to have allegiance in form.
 ('Allegiance came to be to the Ottomans in form').

4 Verbs of remaining: *baqiyy-a* بَقِيَ, *Zall-a* ظَلَّ, *maa zaal-a* مَا زَالَ, *maa daam-a* مَا دَامَ

Several verbs and verbal expressions that are sisters of *kaan-a* denote the concept of remaining in a particular state or condition. They may be used independently or as auxiliary verbs. These include:

4.1 *baqiy-a / ya-bqaa* يَبْقَى / يَبْقَى 'to stay; remain'

سَيَبْقَى سِرًّا.

sa-ya-bqaa sirriyy-an.

It will remain secret.

سَتَبْقَى طويلاً في ذاكرة العالم.

*sa-ta-bqaa Tawiil-an fii dhaakirat-i**l-°aalam-i.*

It will remain long in the world's memory.

4.2 *Zall-a / ya-Zall-u* يَظَلُّ / يَظَلُّ 'to keep, keep on, to remain'

ظَلَّ في غيبوبة تامة.

Zall-a fii ghaybuubat-in taamat-in.

He remained in a complete coma.

سَيَظَلُّ أفضل.

sa-ya-Zall-u °afDal-a.

It will remain better.

ظَلَّتْ موجودة تحت رماد العلاقات الجيدة.

Zall-at mawjuudat-an taHt-a ramaad-i l-°alaqaat-i l-jayyidat-i.

It remained present under the ashes of good relations.

4.3 *maa zaal-a / laa ya-zaal-u* مَا زَالَ / لَا يَزَالُ 'to remain; to continue to be; to still be'

This expression consists of a negative particle (*maa* plus the past tense; *lam* plus the jussive; or *laa* plus the imperfect) plus the verb *zaal-a* 'to cease,' thus it means literally 'to not cease to be.' In terms of tense, both the past tense form and the present tense usually have present tense meaning. Sometimes in context, however, they may refer to the past, or be equivalent to an English past tense.

الصناعات الشعبية ما زالت حية.

*al-Sinaa°aat-u l-sha°biyyat-u maa**zaal-at Hayyat-an.*

Handicrafts continue to be lively.

ما زال قائماً.

maa zaal-a qaa°im-an.

It still exists.

ما زال انهياره مستمراً.

maa zaal-a nhiyaar-u-hu mustamirr-an.

Its decline is still continuous.

ما زالت مستعملة.

maa zaal-at musta°malat-an.

They are still used.

4.3.1 *maa zaal-a* As an auxiliary verb

As an auxiliary verb *maa zaal-a* conveys the idea of continuation of a state or action. It is followed by a present tense main verb.

أسوار لا تزال تقف.

°aswaar-un laa ta-zaal-u ta-qif-u

walls that are still standing

ما زلنا نحبه.

maa zil-naa nu-Hibb-u-hu

We still love it.

4.3.1.1 WITH EQUATIONAL SENTENCES

لا يزالُ عندنا وقتٌ.

laa ya-zaal-u 'ind-a-naa waqt-un.

We still have time

('there is still time to-us').

ما زِلْتُ في مرحلة التحضير.

maa zil-tu fii marHalat-i l-taHDir-i.

I am still in the preparation stage.

4.4 *maa daam-a* 'as long as'

The expression *maa daam-a* ما دام consists of the pronoun *maa* 'that which' or 'what' and the verb *daam-a* دام 'to continue,' 'to remain,' or 'to last.'

ما دامتْ خارجةً من الشرعية ، فإنَّ المقاطعة مستمرة.

maa daam-at xaarijat-an min-a l-shar'iiyyat-i, fa-'inna l-muqaaTa'at-a
mustamirrat-un.

As long as it remains outside legality, the boycott will continue.

5 Verbs of seeming or appearing

These verbs are not considered sisters of *kaan-a* but are similar in that they take an object complement in the accusative case even though they are not transitive.

5.1 *badaa* / *ya-bduu* بدا / يبدو 'to seem; to appear'

لا يبدو متفائلاً.

laa ya-bduu mutafaa'il-an

He does not seem optimistic.

يبدو عتيقاً جداً.

ya-bduu 'atiiq-an jidd-an.

It looks very ancient/antique.

5.2 *Zahar-a*/*ya-Zhar-u* ظَهَرَ / يظهر 'to seem; to appear'

يَظْهَرُ ضعيفاً.

ya-Zhar-u Da'iiif-an.

He seems weak.

Negation and exception

Arabic uses a variety of means to express negation and exception. This is accomplished primarily through the use of negative or exceptive **particles**, which often affect the following phrase by requiring a particular case on a noun or noun phrase, or a particular mood of the verb. There is also a verb, *lays-a* لَيْسَ, which has a negative meaning ‘to not be.’ Each of these negative or exceptive expressions could be the topic for extensive grammatical analysis, but here their description is limited to their basic functions in MSA.

1 The verb *lays-a* لَيْسَ ‘to not be’

This verb is exceptional in two ways:

- (1) it is inflected only as a past tense verb but it negates the present tense of “be”¹;
- (2) it is a sister of *kaan-a* كَانَ and therefore requires its complement to be in the accusative case.

1.1 Chart: conjugation of *lays-a* لَيْسَ ‘to not be’

The verb *lays-a* لَيْسَ has only one type of conjugation. It appears on the surface to resemble a past tense verb because it is inflected with the past tense suffixes, but in terms of meaning, it negates the present tense. Like a hollow verb, *lays-a* لَيْسَ has two stems; a short one, *las-* لَسَ-, used when the suffix starts with a consonant, and a longer stem, *lays-* لَيْسَ-, used when the suffix starts with a vowel or is only a vowel.²

¹ Negation of the perfect or past tense of “be” is not done with *lays-a*, but with the use of the negative particle *lam* plus the jussive form of *kaan-a* ‘to be.’ Similarly, the future tense of “be” is negated through the use of the future negative particle *lan* plus the subjunctive of *kaan-a*. The verb *lays-a*, therefore, is specialized and limited to negating the present tense of “be.”

² Lecomte (1968, 87) states that *lays-a* “est une curieuse particule pseudo-verbale dotée d’une conjugaison d’allure concave.”

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person	لَسْتُ <i>las-tu</i>		لَسْنَا <i>las-naa</i>
Second person:			
m.	لَسْتَ <i>las-ta</i>	لَسْتُمَا <i>las-tumaa</i>	لَسْتُمْ <i>las-tum</i>
f.	لَسْتِ <i>las-ti</i>	لَسْتُمَا <i>las-tumaa</i>	لَسْتُنَّ <i>las-tunna</i>
Third person:			
m.	لَيْسَ <i>lays-a</i>	لَيْسَا <i>lays-aa</i>	لَيْسُوا <i>lays-uu</i>
f.	لَيْسَتْ <i>lays-at</i>	لَيْسَتَا <i>lays-ataa</i>	لَيْسْنَ <i>las-na</i>

1.2 Discussion and examples of *lays-a* لَيْسَ

لَيْسَ الْأُسْتَاذُ مُؤَرِّخًا.

lays-a l-ʿustaadh-u muʿarrix-an.

The professor is **not** a historian.

In the above example, the verb *lays-a* لَيْسَ starts the sentence, followed by the subject noun *al-ʿustaadh-u* الْأُسْتَاذُ in the nominative case. The predicate or complement of the verb *lays-a* لَيْسَ (*muʿarrix-an* مُؤَرِّخًا) is in the accusative case because *lays-a* لَيْسَ is a “sister” of the verb *kaan-a* كَانَ and thus belongs to a group of verbs that (although intransitive in the traditional sense of the term) take their complements in the accusative case.³

If the sentence were not negative, it would be equational and verbless. The subject would be *al-ʿustaadh-u* الْأُسْتَاذُ and the predicate *muʿarrix-un* مُؤَرِّخٌ, both in the nominative case, as is the rule with equational sentences:

الْأُسْتَاذُ مُؤَرِّخٌ.

al-ʿustaadh-u muʿarrix-un.

The professor is a historian.

In another example,

لَسْتُ لُبْنَانِيَّةً.

las-tu lubnaaniyyat-an.

I am **not** Lebanese.

³ See Chapter 36, on verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (*kaan-a wa-ʿaxawaat-u-haa* كَانَ وَأَخَوَاتُهَا).

The verb is inflected for the first person (“I”) and the predicate or complement consists of just one word, an adjective, in the accusative case: *lubnaaniyyat-an* لبنانية. It is feminine because the writer is feminine and speaking of herself. If the sentence were not negative it would be:

أنا لبنانية.

ʾanaa lubnaaniyyat-un.

I [am] Lebanese (f.).

with a pronoun subject (*ʾanaa* أنا ‘I’), no overt verb, and the adjective as predicate, in the nominative case. For more extensive discussion of equational sentences, see Chapter 4, section 2.

1.3 Further examples

Here are a few more examples of *lays-a* لَيْسَ in context:

1.3.1 Predicate of *lays-a* لَيْسَ is a noun or adjective in the accusative case

لَيْسَتْ مِنْقَبَةٌ أَثَار.

lays-at munaqqibat-a ʾaathaar-in

She is not an archaeologist.

هَذَا لَيْسَ رَجُلًا شَرِيفًا.

haadhaa lays-a rajul-an shariif-an.

This is not a noble man.

هَذَا لَيْسَ السَّبَبُ.

haadhaa lays-a l-sabab-a.

This is not the reason.

سَمِعْتُكَ لَيْسَتْ جَيِّدَةً.

sumʿat-u-ka lays-at jayyidat-an.

Your reputation is not good.

1.3.2 Predicate of *lays-a* لَيْسَ is a prepositional phrase

The predicate or complement of *lays-a* may be a prepositional phrase rather than a noun, noun phrase, or adjective. In this case, the preposition causes the following noun to be in the genitive case.

لَيْسَ مِنَ الْضَّرُورِيِّ.

lays-a min-a l-Daruuriyy-i.

It is not necessary.

أَلَيْسَ كَذَلِكَ؟

ʾa-lays-a ka-dhaalika?

Isn't it so ('like that')?

لَسْتُ عَلَى اطَّلَاعٍ كَافٍ عَلَى الْمَوْضُوعِ.

las-tu ʿalaa TTilaaʿ-in kaaf-in ʿalaa l-mawDuuʿ-i.

I am not informed enough about the subject.

1.3.3 Predicate of *lays-a* لَيْسَ is an adverb

The predicate of *lays-a* may also be an invariable adverb that does not take case inflections. In the following sentence, the adverb *hunaaka* هُنَاكَ is the predicate and *Siraaʿ-un* صِرَاعٌ ‘struggle’ is the subject of *lays-a* لَيْسَ.

لَيْسَ هُنَاكَ صِرَاعٌ.

lays-a hunaaaka Siraa°-un.

There is **no** struggle ('There is **not** a struggle').

2 Negative particles and their effects

2.1 *laa* لا 'no; not; there is no'

The negative particle *laa* has five functions: (1) by itself, it can mean simply 'no' in response to a statement, question, or a request; (2) it negates the present tense of verbs; (3) it is used for the negative imperative; (4) to indicate categorical negation; and (5) when repeated, indicates 'neither . . . nor.'

2.1.1 *laa* = 'no'

هَلْ أَنْتَ مِصْرِيٌّ؟

hal °anta miSriyy-un?

Are you Egyptian?

لَا. لَسْتُ مِصْرِيًّا.

laa. las-tu miSriyy-an.

No. I am not Egyptian.

2.1.2 *laa* لا = not; negation of present tense verb

The negative particle *laa* is used to negate present tense verbs. The verb remains in the indicative mood.⁴

لَا أَفْهَمُ مَاذَا تَقُولُ.

laa °a-fham-u maadhaa ta-quul-u.

I do not understand what you are saying.

لَا أُدَخِّنُ.

laa °u-daxxin-u.

I do not smoke.

لَا يُحَاوِلُ الْخُرُوجَ.

laa yu-Haawil-u l-xuruuj-a.

He is not trying to leave.

لَا أُحِبُّ الْجَزَرَ.

laa °u-Hibb-u l-jazara-a.

I do not like carrots.

لَا يَشْكُلُ ضَمَانَةً.

laa yu-shakkil-u Damaanat-an.

It does not constitute a guarantee.

لَا يَجُوزُ.

laa ya-juuz-u.

It is not possible/permissible.

2.1.3 *laa* لا with the subjunctive

2.1.3.1 *°allaa* أَلَّا = *°an* أَنْ + *laa* لا: The negative particle *laa* may negate a verb in the subjunctive if there is a subjunctivizing element present. In the following

⁴ In his 1996 article "Negative polarity and presupposition in Arabic" Elabbas Benmamoun proposes that "negative *laa* has three different suppletive forms that correlate with different temporal interpretations: *laa* which occurs in the present tense . . . , *lam* which carries past tense . . . , and *lan* which carries future tense" (Benmamoun 1996, 51). While all three particles are negations, and all start with the letter *laam*, they have different effects on the following verb and are presented separately here.

sentences, the subjunctivizing phrase *ya-jib-u ʿan* ('it is necessary that') is followed by *laa* plus a verb in the subjunctive, and the subjunctivizing verb phrase, *qarrar-a ʿan* 'to decide to' is also followed by *laa* plus a verb in the subjunctive. The particles *ʿan* and *laa* are joined together in a contraction, *ʿallaa*:

قَرَّرْتُ أَلَّا أَعْمَلَ فِيهِ.

qarrar-tu ʿallaa ʿa-ʿmal-a fii-hi.

I decided **not to work** in it.

2.1.3.2 *laa* لا AFTER *Hattaa* حَتَّى: The subjunctivizing particle *Hattaa* حَتَّى 'in order that, so that' may be followed by *laa* لا plus a verb in the subjunctive:

حَتَّى لَا يَشُطُّ فِي تَأْيِيدِ سِيَاسَتِهِمْ

Hattaa laa ya-shuTT-a fii taʿyiid-i siyaasat-i-him

so that it does **not go too far** in supporting their policy

2.1.4 *laa* لا + verb as modifier

A negative verb phrase is occasionally used to express a negative adjectival or adverbial concept in Arabic. This phrase usually takes the form of an indefinite relative clause:

حَرَكَةٌ لَا تَهْدَأُ قَرَبَ الْمَسْجِدِ

Harakat-un laa-ta-hdaʿ-u qurb-a l- masjid-i

non-stop motion/movement near the mosque

تُعْطَى لِلسِّيَاحَةِ مَعْنَى خَاصًّا لَا يُمْكِنُ إِنكَارُهَا.

tu-ʿTii li-l-siyaaHat-i maʿnan xaaSS-an laa yu-mkin-u ʿinkaar-u-hu.

It gives to tourism an **undeniably** special meaning.

2.1.5 The negative imperative with *laa* لا

The negative imperative is formed by using *laa* plus the jussive form of the verb in the second person ("you").⁵

لَا تُزْعِجْ نَفْسَكَ.

laa tu-zʿij nafs-a-ka.

Don't disturb yourself/don't bother.

لَا تَسْتَخْدِمِ الْمَصْعَدَ.

laa ta-staxdim-i l-miSʿad-a.

Don't use the elevator.

2.1.6 The *laa* لا of categorical or absolute negation: (*laa al-naafiya li-l-jins* لا النافية للجنس)

This is a special use of *laa* that negates the existence of something absolutely. The particle *laa* precedes a noun which is in the accusative, but with no nunation

⁵ For further discussion of the imperative, see Chapter 35.

and no definite article. This type of negation is used in a number of idiomatic expressions.

لا سبيلَ لدفعه.

laa sabiil-a li-daf^c-i-hi

There is no way to defend it.

لا قلبَ لها.

laa qalb-a la-haa.

She is heartless ('there is no heart to her').

لا شكَّ فيه.

laa shakk-a fii-hi.

There's no doubt about it.

لا بأسَ به.

laa ba's-a bi-hi.

It's not bad ('There is no harm in it').

لا جديدَ تحتَ الشمسِ.

laa jadiid-a taHt-a l-shams-i.

There is no[thing] new under the sun.

لا ريبَ فيه.

laa rayb-a fii-hi.

There is no doubt about it.

لا فائدةَ.

laa faa'idat-a.

It is useless. It is no use.

لا شكرَ على الواجبِ.

laa shukr-a 'alaa l-waajib-i.

'There is no thanking for a duty'
(used as a polite response to an expression of thanks). = 'Don't mention it.'

2.1.6.1 RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS WITH *laa* لا OF ABSOLUTE NEGATION

لا إلهَ إلا الله.

laa 'ilaah-a 'illaa llaah-u.

There is no god but God.

لا حولَ ولا قوةَ إلا بالله.

laa Hawl-a wa-laa quwwat-a 'illaa bi-llaah-i.

There is no power and no strength but in God.

2.1.7 *laa* ... *wa-laa* ولا ... لا 'neither ... nor'

The two-part formation of *laa* ... *wa-laa* ولا ... لا is used for the coordinate negative 'neither ... nor' or 'don't ... even ...'. In response to a negative statement, the *wa-laa* ولا part may be used at the start of the response.

ولا أنا.

wa-laa 'anaa.

Me either/me neither

(depending on context)

لا في فاسَ ولا في مراكشَ

laa fii faas-a wa-laa fii marraakash-a

neither in Fez nor in Marrakesh

لا الولايات المتحدة ولا الاتحاد السوفياتي

laa l-wilaayaat-u l-muttaHidat-u wa-laa l-ittiHaad-u l-suufiyaatiyy-u

neither the United States nor the Soviet Union

2.1.8 *laa* لا as component of compound

Because of its ability to negate a noun or adjective directly, *laa* enters actively into the formation of compound words that include concepts of negation. They include both adjectives and nouns. For example,

invertebrate	<i>laa-faqaariyy</i>	لا فقاريّ
never-ending	<i>laa -nihaa'iy</i>	لا نهائيّ
decentralization	<i>al-laa-markaziyya</i>	اللامركزيّة
the unconscious	<i>al-laa-wa'iy</i>	اللاوعي

نقطة اللا رجوع

nuqTat-u l-laa-rujuu' -i

the point of no return

2.2 Negation of the past

2.2.1 *lam* لَمْ + jussive

The most common way to negate a past tense verb in written Arabic is to use the negative particle *lam* followed by the verb in the jussive mood.

لم نأت.	لم تَكْشِفِ الشرطةُ هُوَيْتَهُ.
<i>lam na-'ti.</i>	<i>lam ta-kshuf-i l-shurTat-u huwiyyat-a-hu.</i>

We did not come.	The police did not reveal his identity.
------------------	---

لم يَقَعْ حادثٌ.	لم يَسْبِقْ لَهُ مَثِيلٌ.
<i>lam ya-qa' Haadith-un.</i>	<i>lam ya-sbiq la-hu mathiil-un.</i>

No accident happened.	It is unprecedented.
('an accident did not happen')	('an equivalent has not preceded it')

لم يَمُتْ أَحَدٌ.	فلم يَحْدَثْ ما حدث في الشام.
<i>lam ya-mut 'aHad-un.</i>	<i>fa-lam ya-Hdath maa Hadath-a fii l-shaam-i.</i>
No one died.	What happened in Syria did not happen [here].
('[some]one did not die')	

2.2.2 *maa* مَا + past tense verb

This way of negating the past is rare in written Arabic, although it is widely used in spoken Arabic vernaculars. The only instance of it that occurred in the database was in a negation of a future perfect verb:

ما كَانَتْ سَتَعْرِفُ القراءةَ والكتابةَ.

maa kaan-at sa-ta-'rif-u l-qiraa'at-a wa-l-kitaabat-a.

She would not have known how to read and write ('reading and writing').

2.2.3 *lan* لَنْ plus subjunctive to negate the future tense

To negate a proposition in the future the particle *lan* لَنْ is used followed by the verb in the subjunctive mood.

لَنْ أَنْسَى.	لَنْ يَكُونَ الْأَخِيرَ مِنْ نَوْعِهِ.
<i>lan ʾa-nsaa.</i>	<i>lan ya-kuun-a l-ʾaxiir-a min nawʿ-i-hi.</i>
I won't forget.	It will not be the last of its kind.
لَنْ يَتَوَقَّفَ.	لَنْ تُعْرِقَلَ الْإِتِّفَاقُ.
<i>lan ya-tawaqqaf-a.</i>	<i>lan tu-ʿarqil-a l-ttifaq-a.</i>
He will not stop.	It will not obstruct the agreement.

2.2.4 Use of *ghayr* غَيْرٌ 'other than; non-'

The noun *ghayr* is used in three ways: as a noun plus pronoun suffix, as the first term of a construct phrase with another noun, and as the first term of a descriptive construct phrase whose second term is an adjective.

It conveys the idea of "otherness" or that something is different from something else.⁶

2.2.4.1 USE OF *ghayr* غَيْرٌ PLUS PRONOUN SUFFIX: The pronoun suffix on *ghayr* غَيْرٌ reflects the number and gender of the noun or pronoun antecedent.

تَخْتَلِفُ عَنْ غَيْرِهَا.	مِثْلَ غَيْرِهَا مِنَ الْمُنْظَمَاتِ
<i>ta-xtalif-u ʿan ghayr-i-haa.</i>	<i>mithl-a ghayr-i-haa min-a l-munaZZamaat-i</i>
She differs from others	like other ('other than it') organizations
('other than she').	

مِصْرُ وَغَيْرُهَا مِنَ الْبِلَادِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ
miSr-u wa-ghayr-u-haa min-a l-bilaad-i l-ʿarabiyyat-i
 Egypt and other Arab countries

2.2.4.2 USE OF *ghayr* غَيْرٌ AS FIRST TERM OF NOUN CONSTRUCT: Used as the first term of a construct phrase or *ʾiDaafa* إضافة, *ghayr* غَيْرٌ carries the meaning of 'other than.'

لَا يَأْكُلُ غَيْرَ اللَّحْمِ وَالْبَطَاطَا.
laa ya-ʾkul-u ghayr-a l-laHm-i wa-l-baTaaTaa.
 He doesn't eat [anything] other than meat and potatoes.

⁶ Cantarino 1975 (II:147–53) provides an extensive analysis of *ghayr* غَيْرٌ and its usage in literary Arabic. See also Wright 1967, II:208–209.

2.2.4.3 *ghayr* غَيْر + ADJECTIVE: 'NON-; IN-; UN-; OTHER THAN; -LESS': In this construction, the noun *ghayr* 'non-; un-, in-, other than' is used as the first term of a construct phrase or ^o*iDaafa* إضافة in order to express negative or privative concepts denoting absence of a quality or attribute. The second term of this kind of construct phrase is an adjective. As the first term of a construct, *ghayr* غَيْر carries the same case as the noun it modifies. As a noun which is the first term of an ^o*iDaafa*, it cannot have the definite article.

The second term of the ^o*iDaafa* construction is an adjective or participle in the genitive case which agrees with the noun being modified in gender, number, and definiteness. Therefore, it is the second term of this descriptive construct that shows agreement with the modified noun.⁷ Here are some examples:⁸

non-Islamic	<i>ghayr-u 'islaamiyy-in</i>	غَيْرُ إِسْلَامِيٍّ
unusual	<i>ghayr-u 'aadiyy-in</i>	غَيْرُ عَادِيٍّ
non-oil-exporting	<i>ghayr-u muSaddir-in li-l-nafT-i</i>	غَيْرُ مُصَدِّرٍ لِلنَّفْطِ
unsuitable	<i>ghayr-u munaasib-in</i>	غَيْرُ مُنَاسِبٍ
indirect	<i>ghayr-u mubaashir-in</i>	غَيْرُ مُبَاشِرٍ
unofficial	<i>ghayr-u rasmiyy-in</i>	غَيْرُ رَسْمِيٍّ

- (1) **Modifying definite noun:** To modify a definite noun, *ghayr* غَيْر is followed by an adjective with the definite article.

الدولُ غَيْرُ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ <i>al-bilaad-u ghayr-u l-'islaamiyyat-i</i> the non-Islamic countries	الدولُ غَيْرُ الْمُنْحَاذَةِ <i>al-duwal-u ghayr-u l-munHaazat-i</i> non-aligned states
الدولُ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةُ غَيْرُ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ <i>al-duwal-u l-'islaamiyyat-u ghayr-u l-'arabiyyat-i</i> the non-Arab Muslim countries	الْقَارِئُ غَيْرُ الْمُسْلِمِ <i>al-qaari'-u ghayr-u l-muslim-i</i> the non-Muslim reader

- (2) **Modifying indefinite noun:** To modify an indefinite noun, *ghayr* غَيْر is followed by an indefinite adjective.

كَلْبٌ غَيْرُ أَصِيلٍ <i>kalb-un ghayr-u 'aSiil-in</i> a non-pedigreed dog	غَيْرُ صَحِيحٍ مَا يَقُولُهُ. <i>ghayr-u SaHiH-in maa ya-quul-u-hu.</i> It is untrue what he says.
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⁷ For more examples, see *ghayr* غَيْر in Chapter 10, section 7.2.

⁸ For further discussion of *ghayr* غَيْر see Beeston 1970, 101–102; Kouloughli 1994, 105 and 277–78; Wright 1967, II:208–209.

بشكلٍ غيرٍ منظمٍ

bi-shakl-in *ghayr-i muntaZam-in*
in a disorganized manner

بطرقٍ غيرٍ قانونيةٍ

bi-turuq-in *ghayr-i qaanuuniyyat-in*
in illegal ways

2.2.4.3 *ghayr* غير FOLLOWING NEGATIVE VERB: Following a negative verb, *ghayr* غير has the meaning of ‘only’ or ‘merely.’

لم يقدم غير القليل من الأموال.

lam yu-qaddim *ghayr-a l-qaliil-i min-a l-ʾamwaal-i*.

It offered only a little money (‘It did not offer other than a little money’).

2.2.5 ‘adam’ عدم + noun ‘non-’

The noun ‘adam’ ‘lack; absence; nonexistence’ may be annexed to another noun as the first term of a genitive construct to create a compound lexical item equivalent to various kinds of privative or negative expressions. Although the annexation structure or *ʾiDaafa* is a two-word expression in Arabic, it may carry a non-compositional meaning.⁹

non-interference

‘adam-u tadaxxul-in

عدم تدخل

nonexistence

‘adam-u wujuud-in

عدم وجود

neutrality;

‘adam-u nHiyaaz-in

عدم انحياز

non-alignment

instability

‘adam-u stiqaar-in

عدم استقرار

عدم دعم أي حركة كردية

‘adam-u da‘m-i ‘ayy-i Harakat-in kurdiyyat-in
the non-support of any Kurdish movement

عدم تحقيق تقدم

‘adam-u taHqiq-i taqaddum-in
the non-realization of progress

من المهم عدم تقديم الكثير من التنازلات.

min-a l-muhimm-i ‘adam-u taqdiim-i l-kathiir-i min-a l-tanaazulaat-i.

It is important not to offer [too] many concessions.

3 Exceptive expressions

This category of expressions includes connectives and adverbs with meanings that contrast with previous propositional content. It includes items that have meanings such as “except for,” “however,” “nevertheless” and “despite; in spite of.” Sometimes these items consist of one word, other times they are phrases. They are also referred to as “adversative” expressions.

⁹ See also Chapter 8, section 1.7.1.

3.1 *bal* بَلْ : 'but; rather; but rather'

This word introduces a subordinate clause that contrasts in meaning with the main clause.¹⁰ The verb in the main clause is normally negative, with *bal* introducing a contrary affirmation.

ليست زائدة بَلْ من أصل الكلمة.

lays-at zaa'idat-an bal min 'aSl-i l-kalimat-i.

It is not an affix; rather, it is [part] of the root of the word.

ليس فقط في الشرق الأدنى بَلْ في العالم كله.

lays-a faqaT fii l-sharq-i l-'adnaa bal fii l-'aalam-i kull-i-hi.

Not only in the Near East, but [also] in the whole world.

3.2 *'illaa* إِلَّا : 'except; but; but for'

This is a frequently used exceptive word in modern written Arabic. Its effect on the following phrase varies depending on whether the main clause is a negative or positive assertion.

3.2.1 Affirmative clause + *'illaa* إِلَّا

When the main clause is affirmative and *'illaa* introduces an exception to that statement, it is followed by a noun in the accusative.

الساعة الخامسة إِلَّا ربعاً

al-saa'at-a l-xaamisat-a 'illaa rub'-an

at a quarter to five ('the fifth hour except for a quarter')

جاء كل الطلاب إِلَّا نجيباً.

jaa'-a kull-u l-Tullab-i 'illaa najiib-an.

All the students came except Najib.

3.2.2 Negative clause + *'illaa* إِلَّا

When the main clause is negative, *'illaa* إِلَّا is followed by a noun that takes whatever case its role in the sentence requires. That is, *'illaa* إِلَّا has no grammatical effect on the noun. In the following sentences, for example, the noun phrase after *'illaa* إِلَّا fills the logical role of subject of the verb and is therefore in the nominative case.¹¹

لا يوجد إِلَّا أقلية صغيرة.

laa yuujad-u 'illaa 'aqalliyyat-un Saghiirat-un.

There is only a small minority. ('There is not but a small minority.')

¹⁰ See al-Warraki and Hassanein 1994, 62. In this book, see also Chapter 18, section 3.1.

¹¹ It is interesting to note that verb-subject gender agreement does not extend across *'illaa* back to the verb. Although the logical subject in all these cases is feminine singular, the verb is masculine singular.

لا يفصلُ المغربَ عنُ إسبانيا إلا بضعةً كيلومترات.

laa ya-fSil-u l-maghrib-a 'an isbaanyaa 'illaa biD 'at-u kiiluumitiraat-in.

Only a few kilometers separate Morocco from Spain ('there does not separate Morocco from Spain **but a few kilometers**').

لا يفصلُ نشأةُ الإسلام عن نشأة المسيحية إلا قرونٌ قليلة.

laa ya-fSil-u nash'at-a l-'islaam-i 'an nash'at-i l-masiiHiyyat-i 'illaa quruun-un qaliilat-un.

Only a few centuries separate the birth of Islam from the birth of Christianity ('there does not separate the birth of Islam from the birth of Christianity **but a few centuries**').

3.2.3 'illaa + prepositional phrase

A prepositional phrase may follow 'illaa, especially after a negative main clause.

لا عودةً للمهجرين إلا من خلال الوزير.

laa 'awdat-a li-l-mahjar-iina 'illaa min xilaal-i l-waziir-i.

There is no return for exiles **except through the minister**.

هذه الفرصة لا نجدُها إلا في القاهرة.

haadhihi l-furSat-u laa na-jid-u-haa 'illaa fii l-qaahirat-i.

This opportunity is found only in Cairo.

('We do not find this opportunity **except in Cairo**.')

لا يخرجُ من مخابئه إلا خلالَ الليل.

laa ya-xruj-u min maxaabi'-i-hi 'illaa xilaal-a l-layl-i.

He doesn't leave his hiding places **except at night**.

3.2.4 'illaa 'anna : 'however; nonetheless; but'

This exceptive phrase introduces a clause or a sentence which contrasts with or balances out the previous one. Following the subordinating particle 'anna is either a noun in the accusative case, or else a suffixed pronoun. In the following sentences, 'illaa 'anna is the initial element, relating the sentence to one that came just prior to it.

إلا أن تطوّراً أكثر إثارةً بدأ يلفتُ النظرَ.

'illaa 'anna taTawwur-an 'akthar-a 'ithaarat-an bada'-a yu-lfit-u l-naZar-a.

However, a more exciting development has started to redirect attention.

إلا أنه لم يُنجز حتى موعِدٍ قريبٍ.

'illaa 'anna-hu lam yu-njaz Hattaaw maw'id-in qariib-in.

However, it wasn't completed until recently.

إِلَّا أَنْ الْعَدَالَةَ سَتَأْخُذُ مَجْرَاهَا.

^{ʔillaa ʔanna l-ʔadaalat-a sa-ta-ʔxudh-u majraa-haa.}

However, justice will take its course.

In the following sentences, ^{ʔillaa ʔanna} إِلَّا أَنْ introduces an exceptive clause that contrasts with the main clause. In this situation, it does not always have a lexical equivalent in English. Note that the main clause may start with an exceptive expression.

كَادَ يُمَحَى إِلَّا أَنْ الْأَسْتَاذَ أَقَامَ مُؤْتَمَرَاتٍ.

^{kaad-a yu-mHaa ʔilla ʔanna l-ʔustaadh-a ʔaqaam-a muʔtamaraat-in.}

It would have disappeared, **except that** the professor held conferences.

وإِنْ كَانَتْ بَدَايَتِي تَأَخَّرَتْ إِلَّا أَنَّهَا جَاءَتْ.

^{wa-ʔin kaan-at bidaayat-ii taʔaxxar-at ʔillaa ʔanna-haa jaaʔ-at.}

Although my start was delayed, **[however]** it did come.

وَرَغَمَ بُلُوغِي السِّتِينَ تَقْرِيْبًا إِلَّا أَنَّنِي سَرِيعُ التَّعَلُّمِ.

^{wa-raghm-a buluugh-ii l-sittiina taqriib-an ʔillaa ʔanna-nii sarii-u l-taʔallum-i.}

Despite my reaching almost sixty [years old], **[however]** I'm quick to learn.

وَمَعَ أَنَّنِي لَمْ أَعْرِفِ التَّفَاصِيلَ إِلَّا أَنْ إِدْرَاكِي هُوَ أَنَّ الْمَفَاوِضَاتِ تَجْرِي.

^{wa-maʔ-a ʔanna-nii lam ʔa-ʔarif-i l-tafaaSiil-a ʔillaa ʔanna ʔidraak-ii huwa ʔanna l-mufaawaDaat-i ta-jrii.}

Although I didn't know the details, **[however]** it was my understanding that the negotiations were being held.

3.3 *maa ʔadaa*: 'except; except for'

This exceptive phrase is followed by an accusative noun:

ضَحَكَ الطَّلَابُ جَمِيعُهُمْ مَا عَدَا أَحْمَدَ.

^{DaHik-a l-Tullaab-u jamii-u-hum maa ʔadaa ʔaHmad-a.}

All the students laughed **except** Ahmad.

وَمَا عَدَا هَذِهِ الْمُلَاحَظَاتِ

^{wa-maa ʔadaa haadhihi l-mulaaHaZaat-i}
except for these observations

كُلَّ يَوْمٍ مَا عَدَا الْإِثْنَيْنِ

^{kull-a yawm-in maa ʔadaa l-ithnayn-a}
every day **except** Monday

3.4 *siwaa* سِوَى: 'except; except for'

This word is an indeclinable noun which normally goes into an ^{ʔiDaafa} إضافة structure with the following noun, very much as does *ghayr* غير. The following noun or noun phrase is therefore in the genitive case. Usually, *siwaa* سِوَى introduces an exception to a negative statement.

لم يبقَ سوى أشهرٍ قليلةٍ.

lam ya-bqa siwaa 'ashhur-in qaliilat-in.

There remained only a few months ('there did not remain **but a few months**').

لم يكن في الصندوق سوى جواهر نفيسة.

lam ya-kun fii l-Sanduuq-i siwaa jawaahir-a nafiisat-in.

In the box were only precious jewels

('There was not in the box **but precious jewels**').

حتى لو لم تشاهد في السنة سوى فلمٍ واحدٍ فقط

Hattaa law lam tu-shaahid fii l-sanat-i siwaa film-in waaHid-in faqaT

even if you don't see **but one film** a year

3.5 *ma^c-a dhaalika* مَعَ ذَٰكَ 'nevertheless; in spite of that' *ma^c-a*

'anna مَعَ أَنَّ 'although, despite'

The semi-preposition *ma^c-a* مَعَ means 'with' but it may also convey a sense of contrast or exception, as in these two expressions.

وَمَعَ ذَٰكَ فَإِنَّ الْكِتَابَ عَلَى مَسْتَوًى عَالٍ.

wa-ma^c-a dhaalika fa-'inna l-kitaab-a 'alaa mustaw-an 'aal-in.

Nevertheless, the book is on a high level.

وَمَعَ أَنَّنِي لَمْ أَعْرِفِ التَّفَاصِيلَ

wa-ma^c-a 'anna-nii lam 'a-'rif-i l-tafaaSiil-a

although I do not know the details

3.6 *raghm-a* رَغَمَ, *bi-l-raghm-i* بِالرَّغَمِ, *'alaa l-raghm-i* عَلَى الرَّغَمِ 'despite; in spite of'

The word *raghm* is a noun which goes into an *'iDaafa* relationship with the following noun or noun phrase, which is thus in the genitive case. It may be used by itself, or with *bi-* or with *'alaa*.

رَغَمَ إنْكَارِهَا ذَٰكَ

raghm-a 'inkaar-i-haa dhaalika

despite her denying that

رَغَمَ الضُّغُوطِ كُلِّهَا

raghm-a l-DughuuT-i kull-i-haa

despite all the pressures

وَعَلَى رَغَمِ هَذِهِ الْعُودَةِ الْقَوِيَّةِ

wa-'alaa raghm-i haadhihi l-'awdat-i

l-qawwiyyat-i

despite this strong comeback

وَرَغَمَ الْاِحْتِجَاجَاتِ

wa-raghm-a l-iHtijaajaat-i

despite excuses

بِالرَّغَمِ مِنْ مَرُورِ عَشْرِينَ عَامًا

bi-l-raghm-i min muruur-i 'ishriina 'aam-an

despite the passage of twenty years

عَلَى رَغَمِ عَدَمِ انْتِظَامِهَا

'alaa raghm-i 'adam-i ntiZaam-i-haa

despite its lack of organization

3.7 *‘alaa raghm-i ‘anna* عَلَى رَغْمٍ أَنَّ: ‘despite [the fact] that’

The phrase *‘alaa raghm-i* عَلَى رَغْمٍ may be directly followed by the subordinating conjunction *‘anna* and a subordinate clause. In this case, the entire clause acts as the second term of an *‘iDaafa* after *raghm*. It is often followed by another exceptive clause introduced by *‘illaa* *‘anna* ‘nevertheless.’

وَعَلَى رَغْمٍ أَنَّ مَسْئُولِينَ فِي الْوِزَارَةِ قَالُوا ... إِلَّا أَنَّهُ يُعْتَقَدُ أَنَّ ...

wa-‘alaa raghm-i ‘anna mas’uul-iina fii l-wizaarat-i qaal-uu ... ‘illaa ‘anna-hu yu-‘taqad-u ‘anna ...

despite the fact that ministry officials said ... it is nevertheless considered that ...

وَعَلَى رَغْمٍ أَنَّ الشَّرْكَةَ لَمْ تَعْلَن كَلْفَةَ الْمَشْرُوعِ ، إِلَّا أَنَّ مَصَادِرَ صِنَاعَةِ الْغَازِ الطَّبِيعِيِّ

wa-‘alaa raghm-i ‘anna l-sharikat-a lam tu-‘lin kalfat-a l-mashruu‘-i, ‘illaa ‘anna maSaadir-a Sinaa‘at-i l-ghaaz-i l-Tabii‘iyy-i

despite the fact that the company did not announce the cost of the plan, nevertheless, natural gas industry sources ...

فَعَلَى رَغْمٍ أَنَّ الْخِلَافَةَ الْعَبَّاسِيَّةَ كَانَتْ الْمَرْجِعَ

fa-‘alaa raghm-i ‘anna l-xalaafat-a l-‘abbaasiyy-a kaan-at l-marji‘-a

despite the fact that the Abbasid Caliphate was the authority

3.8 *wa-‘in* وَإِنْ: ‘even though; even if; despite the fact that’

This phrase is a combination of the conjunction *wa-* and the conditional marker, *‘in*.

وَإِنْ كَانَ هُنَاكَ مُحَافِظُونَ يَرْفُضُونَ الْإِذْعَانَ لِهَذَا التَّغْيِيرِ

wa-‘in kaan-a hunaaka muHaafiZ-uuna ya-rfuD-uuna l-‘idh‘aan-a li-haadhaa l-taghyiir-i

even though there were conservatives who refused to comply with this change

3.9 *law-laa* لَوْ لَا: ‘had it not been for; if it were not for’

This word is a conjunction with exceptive meaning created through the contraction of two particles, *law* لَوْ (contrary to fact conditional) + *laa* لَا (negative), resulting in the meaning of hypothetical negation: ‘had it not been for.’ It is generally followed by a noun in the nominative case but may also be followed by a suffix pronoun.¹²

لَوْ لَا السَّبْعُونَ مِلْمًا الَّتِي انْهَمَرَتْ عَلَى الْبِلَادِ

law-laa l-sab‘uuna milim-an-i llatii nhamar-at ‘alaa l-bilaad-i

had it not been for the 70 millimeters [of rain] that poured on the country

¹² No instances of *law-laa* لَوْ لَا followed by a suffix pronoun were encountered in the data. For further discussion and examples, including suffix pronouns, see Cantarino 1975, III:326–30.

لَوْ لَا احْتِكَاكُهَا بِالشُّعُوبِ الْيُونَانِيَّةِ

law-laa Htikaak-u-haa bi-l-shu^uub-i l-yuunaaniyyat-i

had it not been for their close contact with the Greek peoples

كَادَ الْمَسْرَحُ يُنْسَى لَوْ لَا الْأُوبرَا.

kaad-a l-masraH-u yu-nsaa law-laa l-^uubiraa.

The theater would have almost been forgotten had it not been for the opera.

Passive and passive-type expressions

1 Introduction

The concept of passive meaning contrasted with active meaning is referred to as **voice** in Western grammatical terms. That is, a verb is either in the active voice or the passive voice. In general, when in the active voice, the doer of the action is the subject of the verb ('We studied the problem' *daras-naa l-mushkilat-a* دَرَسْنَا المشكلة); when a verb is in the passive, the entity affected by the action (the direct object of the verb) becomes the subject ('The problem was studied' *duris-at-i l-mushkilat-u* دُرِسَت المشكلة). The voice of a verb therefore conveys information on the topical focus of a sentence.

1.1 Two types of Arabic passive: inflectional and derivational

There are two basic ways to convey a passive meaning in Arabic, the first being an **inflectional (or internal) passive**, involving a shift of vowel pattern within the verb: e.g., *'uqid-a* عَقِدَ 'it was held' from *'aqad-a* عَقَدَ 'he held,' and the second a **derivational passive**, where a derivational verb form (typically V, VII, or VIII) is used to convey a passive, reflexive, or mediopassive sense of the action involved in the verb (e.g., Form VII *in'aqad-a* اِنْعَقَدَ 'it was held').¹ The type of action denoted by the derivational passive is referred to in Arabic as *muTaawa'a* مطاوعة 'obedience, conformity' because it reflects a **resultative** state of the object (*fataH-tu l-baab-a fa-nfataH-a* فَتَحْتُ البابَ فَاِنْفَتَحَ 'I opened the door and it opened').²

¹ As Wright notes (1967, I:51): "The idea of the passive voice must not be thought to be absolutely identical with that of the fifth, seventh, and eighth forms. These are, strictly speaking *effective* [or resultative-KCR] . . . whilst the other is *purely passive*" (Italics in original). In English, however, it is sometimes necessary to render the equivalent meaning of these derived forms in the passive.

² Terminology for the passive: The passive voice, especially the inflectional passive (*fu'il-a* فُعِلَ), is referred to in Arabic as the "unknown" *al-majhuul* المجهول, indicating that the agent or doer of the action is not known. When a passive-like or mediopassive meaning is conveyed by a derived form of the verb, it is characterized as *muTaawi'* مطاوع or, literally, 'obedient' to an action that has occurred (e.g., *infataH-a* اِنْفَتَحَ 'it opened').

1.2 Use of the inflectional passive

Generally speaking, the inflectional passive is used in Arabic only if the agent or doer of the action is non-designated, unknown, or not to be mentioned for some reason. This contrasts with English where one may readily mention the agent in a passive construction through use of the preposition 'by' ('The problem was studied by us').³

1.3 Contrast between active and passive voice

When the Arabic passive voice is used **the object of the action is the subject of the verb**. The object of the action in the passive is therefore in the nominative case. Note that an essential requirement for a verb to take a passive form is that it **must be a transitive verb**, i.e., one that takes an object.⁴

If active-verb sentences are rephrased as passive constructions, the object of the verb becomes the subject of the sentence, and the verb is marked for passive by virtue of a change in the internal vowels. The doer of the action is normally not mentioned.

Active:

فَتَحْتُ البابَ.

fataH-tu l-baab-a.

I opened the door.

فَتَحْتُهُ.

fataH-tu-hu.

I opened it.

Passive:

فُتِحَ البابُ.

futiH-a l-baab-u.

The door was opened.

فُتِحَ.

futiH-a.

It was opened.

In the derivational passive, or resultative, a particular form of the verb is used to convey passive meaning. Here, it is Form VII:

انْفَتَحَ البابُ.

infataH-a l-baab-u.

The door opened.

انْفَتَحَ.

infataH-a.

It opened.

³ Wright states: "the passive is especially used in four cases; namely (a) when God or some higher being, is indicated as the author of the act; (b) when the author is unknown, or at least not known for certain; (c) when the speaker or writer does not wish to name him; (d) when the attention of the hearer or reader is directed more to the person affected by the act (*patients*, the patient), than to the doer of it (*agens*, the agent)" 1967, I:50.

⁴ The term that Arab grammarians use for "transitive verbs" is *'af'aal muta'addiya* أفعال متعدية, derived from the Form V verb *ta'addaa* 'to go beyond, exceed.' That is, the action of the verb extends beyond the agent and all the way to the object. For intransitive verbs, the Arabic term is either *'af'aal ghayr muta'addiya* أفعال غير متعدية or *'af'aal laazima* أفعال لازمة, verbs whose action does not extend beyond the subject.

Sometimes Arabic inflectional and derivational passives exist side by side; other times one is preferred. Moreover, they may carry slightly different implications about how the action was accomplished (see below).

1.4 Syntax: Restriction on mention of agent

When a passive verb is used in Arabic, mention of the identity of the agent or doer of the action is usually omitted.⁵ It may be unknown or simply unnecessary. For this reason, a term used to refer to the passive in Arabic is *al-majhuul* المجهول 'the unknown.' In fact, if the agent is to be mentioned, the passive is not normally used; the active verb is then the preferred option.⁶

However, **instruments** or other inanimate causative factors (such as the weather) may be mentioned by means of prepositional phrases, e.g.,

فُتِحَ البابُ بهذا المفتاح.

futiH-a l-baab-u bi-haadhaa l-miftaaH-i.

The door was opened by/with this key.

When the subject of the passive verb is mentioned as a separate noun, it is in the nominative case (as in the sentence above, *al-baab-u* البابُ). The technical Arabic term for the subject of a passive verb is *naa'ib al-faa'il* نائب الفاعل 'the deputy doer; the representative of the doer.'⁷

Note that the passive verb may occur in the present or past tense, and in the indicative, jussive or subjunctive moods, depending on context.

2 The internal or inflectional passive

The internal passive is formed by changing the vowel sequence of the verb in the following ways:

2.1 Past tense

In the past or perfect tense, the vowel sequence is */-u -i-/. That is, within the stem, all vowels previous to the stem vowel are /u/ and the stem vowel itself is /i/. This is true for all verb forms (derivations), and for quadriliteral verbs as well as triliteral verbs. Aside from the internal vowel change, the past tense verb in the passive conjugates as usual, with the normal suffixes:*

⁵ Another term used to describe the passive verb in Arabic is *maa lam yu-samma faa'il-u-hu* 'that whose agent is not named.' See Wright 1967, I:50–51 for more on terminology and section 2.5 in this chapter.

⁶ As Cowan notes (1964, 59): "If the agent is mentioned in the sentence one cannot use the passive" (emphasis in original). This rule is occasionally, but only rarely, broken in MSA.

⁷ On the syntax of passive verbs in literary Arabic, see Cantarino 1974, I:52–58.

Paradigm: *wulid-a* وَلِدَ ‘was/were born’

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person:	وَلِدْتُ <i>wulid-tu</i>		وَلِدْنَا <i>wulid-naa</i>
Second person: m.	وَلِدْتَ <i>wulid-ta</i>	وَلِدْتُمَا <i>wulid-tumaa</i>	وَلِدْتُمْ <i>wulid-tum</i>
f.	وَلِدْتِ <i>wulid-ti</i>	وَلِدْتُمَا <i>wulid-tumaa</i>	وَلِدْتُنَّ <i>wulid-tunna</i>
Third person: m.	وَلِدَ <i>wulid-a</i>	وَلِدا <i>wulid-aa</i>	وَلِدُوا <i>wulid-uu</i>
f.	وَلِدَتْ <i>wulid-at</i>	وَلِدَتَا <i>wulid-ataa</i>	وَلِدْنَ <i>wulid-na</i>

2.1.1 Examples of the Form I past tense passive in context

2.1.1.1 STRONG/REGULAR ROOT

نُقِلَ إِلَى الْمُسْتَشْفَى.
nuqil-a ʿilaa l-mustashfaa.
He was transported to the hospital.

مُنِعُوا مِنْ دُخُولِ الْمَدِينَةِ.
muniʿ-uu min duxuul-i l-madiinat-i.
They were prevented from entering the city.

كُتِبَ بِحُرُوفٍ عِبْرِيَّةٍ.
kutib-a bi-Huruuf-in ʿibriyyat-in.
It was written in Hebrew characters.

فُرِضَ رَسْمٌ دُخُولٍ.
furiD-a rasm-u dukhuul-in.
An entry fee was imposed.

2.1.1.2 ASSIMILATED ROOT

سُورِيَا وُضِعَتْ عَلَى الْقَائِمَةِ.
suuriyaa wuDiʿ-at ʿalaa l-qaaʾimat-i.
Syria was placed on the list.

وُجِدَ فِي الْإِسْطَبْلِ.
wujid-a fii l-isTabil-i.
It was found in the stable.

2.1.1.3 GEMINATE ROOT

عُدَّتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ.
ʿudd-at-i l-ʿaSwaaT-u.
The votes were counted.

2.1.1.4 HAMZATED ROOT

سُئِلَ الوزير عن الجريمة.

su'il-a l-waziir-u 'an-i l-jariimat-i.

The minister **was asked** about the crime.

2.1.1.5 HOLLOW ROOT: In the past tense passive of hollow roots, the long medial vowel is /-ii-/. This applies to Forms I, IV, VII, VIII, and X.

وَبِيعَتْ لِأَحَدِ الْمَتَاحِفِ.

wa-bii'at li-'aHad-i l-mataaHif-i

and it **was sold** to one of the museums

قِيلَ لَهُ.

qiil-a la-hu.

It **was said** to him.

2.1.1.6 DEFECTIVE ROOT: In the past tense passive of defective verbs, the final radical is *yaa'*. This applies to the derived forms as well.

وَجَدُوا بُرْجَيْنِ بُنِيَ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ.

wajad-uu burj-ayni buniy-aa min-a l-Hijjaarat-i.

They found two towers [which] **were built** of stone.

وَلِذَلِكَ سُمِّيَتْ الْقُرَى هُنَاكَ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ.

wa-li-dhaalika summiy-at-i l-quraa hunaaka bi-'asmaa'-i-him.

Therefore, the villages there **were named** after them.

وَقَدْ دُعِيَ الصَّحَفِيُّونَ إِلَى الْحُضُورِ.

wa-qad du'iy-a l-SuHufiyy-uuna 'ilaa l-HuDuur-i.

The journalists **were invited** to attend.

2.1.2 The past passive in derived forms of the verb

2.1.2.1 FORM II: *fu'-'il-a* فُعِّلَ

عُيِّنَ طَبِيبًا لِلْمَلِكِ.

'uyyin-a Tabiib-an li-l-malik-i.

He **was appointed** physician to the king.

أُجِّلَتِ الْاجْتِمَاعَاتُ.

'ujjil-at-i l-ijtimaa'aat-u.

The meetings **were delayed**.

2.1.2.2 FORM III: *fuu'-'il-a* فُوعِلَ: The long vowel *-aa-* characteristic of Form III verbs changes to long *-uu-* in the passive.

بُورِكَ الْإِتِّفَاقُ.

buurik-a l-ittifaaq-u.

The agreement **was blessed**.

فُوجِنَتْ بِالْإِتِّفَاقِ.

fuuji'-at bi-l-ttifaaq-i.

She **was surprised** at the agreement.

2.1.2.3 FORM IV: ^ʔuf^ʕil-a أَفْعَلَ; **HOLLOW FORM IV** ^ʔufiil-a أَفِيلَ; **DEFECTIVE FORM IV** ^ʔuf^ʕiy-a أُفْعِي

أُرْسِلَتِ الرِّسَالَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِيكَأ.
^ʔursil-at-i l-risaalat-u min ^ʔamriikaa.
 The letter was sent from America.

أُغْلِقَ الْمَطَارُ.
^ʔughliq-a l-maTaar-u.
 The airport was closed.

أُدْخِلَتْ إِلَى الْمَسْتَشْفَى.
^ʔudxil-at ^ʔilaa l-mustashfaa.
 She was admitted to the hospital.

أَحَدُهُمْ أَصِيبَ بِجُرُوحٍ خَطَرَةٍ.
^ʔaHad-u-hum ^ʔuSiib-a bi-juruuH-in xaTirat-in.
 One of them was afflicted with serious wounds.

أُقِيمَ فِي الْفَنْدُقِ عِشَاءً.
^ʔuqiim-a fii l-funduq-i ^ʕashaa^ʔ-un.
 A dinner was given at the hotel.

خَالَالِالانتِخَابَاتِ الَّتِي أُجْرِيَتْ قَبْلَ سَنَةٍ
 xilaal-a l-intixaabaat-i llatii ^ʔujriy-at qabl-a sanat-in
 during the elections that were held ('were run') a year ago

2.1.2.4 FORM V: ^ʔtufu^ʕil-a (rare) تَفَعَّلَ

تَوَفَّى.
 tuwuffiy-a.
 He passed away.

2.1.2.5 FORM VI: ^ʔtufuu^ʕil-a تَفَوَّعَلَ (rare)

2.1.2.6 FORM VII: none.⁸

2.1.2.7 FORM VIII: ^ʔuftu^ʕil-a أُفْتُعِلَ, FORM VIII HOLLOW ^ʔuftiil-a أُفْتِيلَ, FORM VIII DEFECTIVE ^ʔuftu^ʕiy-a أُفْتَعِي

سَبْعَةُ أَشْخَاصٍ أُعْتُقِلُوا.
 sab^ʕat-u ^ʔashxaaS-in u^ʕtuqil-uu.
 Seven persons were arrested.

اتُّهِمَ بِالْجَرِيمَةِ.
 uttuhim-a bi-l-jariimat-i.
 He was accused of the crime.

وَكَانَ قَدْ أُغْتِيلَ.
 wa-kaan-a qad ughtiil-a.
 He had been assassinated.

اُقْتُضِيَ الْحُضُورُ.
 uqtuDiy-a l-HuDuur-u.
 Attendance was required.

⁸ Note that although the Form VII passive verb does not occur, some Form VII passive participles do exist, e.g., *munHadar* منحدر 'slope.'

2.1.2.8 FORM IX: none.

2.1.2.9 FORM X: *ustuf‘il-a* اُسْتُفِّلَ, FORM X HOLLOW *ustufiil-a* اُسْتُفِيلَ, FORM X DEFECTIVE *ustuf‘iy-a* اُسْتُفْعِي

اُسْتُخْدِمَ. اُسْتُفِيدَ مِنْهُ.
ustuxdim-a. ustafiid-a min-hu.

It was used. It was beneficial
(‘it was benefitted from’).

اُسْتُدْعِيَ بَعْضُ الْمُرَاسِلِينَ.
ustud‘iy-a ba‘D-u l muraasil-iina.
Some correspondents were invited.

2.1.3 Quadriliteral verbs in the past passive

Quadriliteral verbs have the same vowel sequence (-u-i-) as trilateral verbs in the passive.

2.1.3.1 FORM I: *fu‘lil-a* فُعِّلَ

تُرْجِمَتْ هَذِهِ الشُّرُوحُ إِلَى اللَّاتِينِيَّةِ.
turjim-at haadhihi l-shuruuH-u ‘ilaa l-laatiiniyyat-i
These commentaries were translated into Latin.

2.1.3.2 FORMS II, III, IV: rare.

2.2 Inflectional passive: present tense stem

In the present tense, the vowel sequence in the passive is /u/ on the subject marker and, subsequently, /a/ within the verb stem. Note that the present tense stem is used for the subjunctive and jussive, as well.

Present tense passive indicative: *yu-dhkar-u* يَذْكُرُ ‘he/it is mentioned’

	Singular	Dual	Plural
First person:	أَذْكُرُ <i>‘u-dhkar-u</i>		نَذْكُرُ <i>nu-dhkar-u</i>
Second person:	تَذْكُرُ <i>tu-dhkar-u</i>	تَذْكُرَانِ <i>tu-dhkar-aani</i>	تَذْكُرُونَ <i>tu-dhkar-uuna</i>
m.			
f.	تَذْكُرِينَ <i>tu-dhkar-iina</i>	تَذْكُرَانِ <i>tu-dhkar-aani</i>	تَذْكُرْنَ <i>tu-dhkar-na</i>
Third person:	يَذْكُرُ <i>yu-dhkar-u</i>	يَذْكُرَانِ <i>yu-dhkar-aani</i>	يَذْكُرُونَ <i>yu-dhkar-uuna</i>
m.			
f.	تَذْكُرُ <i>tu-dhkar-u</i>	تَذْكُرَانِ <i>tu-dhkar-aani</i>	يَذْكُرْنَ <i>yu-dhkar-na</i>

2.2.1 Examples of the Form I present tense passive in context

2.2.1.1 STRONG/REGULAR ROOT: *yu-f^ʿal-u* يُفَعَّلُ

تُعَدُّ فِي الْقَاهِرَةِ صَبَاحَ غَدٍ.
tu-^ʿqad-u fii l-qaahirat-i SabaH-a ghad-in.
 It will be held tomorrow morning
 in Cairo.

وَيُذَكَّرُ أَنَّ الْأَمِينَ الْعَامَّ
wa-yu-dhkar-u ʾanna l-ʾamiin-a
l-^ʿaamm-a
 it is mentioned that the secretary
 general

2.2.1.2 ASSIMILATED ROOTS: *yuu^ʿal-u* يُوَعَّلُ: In assimilated verbs, the present tense passive shows a long vowel /-uu-/ after the subject marker because of the merging of the /-u-/ of the passive with the underlying verb-initial semivowel (usually *waaw*).

السَّلَالُ الَّتِي يُوَضَّعُ فِيهَا الْخُبْزُ
al-silaal-u llatii yuuDa^ʿ-u fii-haa l-xubz-u
 baskets in which bread is put

يُوجَدُ حُلٌّ لِلْمَشْكِلةِ.
yuujaad-u Hall-un li-l-mushkilat-i.
 There is ('is found') an answer to
 the problem.

2.2.1.3 GEMINATE ROOTS: *yu-fa^{ʿʿ}-u* يُفَعَّعُ

تُعَدُّ أَدِيبَةً مَوْهُوبَةً.
tu-^ʿadd-u ʾadiibat-an mawhuubat-an.
 She is considered a gifted writer.

2.2.1.4 HAMZATED ROOTS: *hamza-INITIAL: yu-^ʿal-u* يُوَعَّلُ; *hamza-MEDIAL: yu-f^ʿal-u* يُفَعَّلُ; *hamza-FINAL: yu-f^ʿa^ʿ-u* يُفَعَّا

تُؤْكَلُ الْمُقَبَّلَاتُ.
tu-^ʿkal-u l-muqabbilaat-u.
 The hors d'oeuvres are being eaten.
 تُقْرَأُ الْمَقَالَةُ.
tu-qra^ʿ-u l-maqaalat-u.
 The article is being read.

يُسْأَلُ عَنِ السِّيَاسَةِ.
yu-s^ʿal-u ʿan-i l-siyaasat-i.
 He is being asked about the policy.

2.2.1.5 HOLLOW ROOTS: *yu-faal-u* يُفَالُ

تُبَاعُ فِيهَا الْهَدَايَا.
tu-baa^ʿ-u fii-haa l-hadaayaa.
 Gifts are sold in it.

مَا قِيلَ وَمَا سَيُقَالُ عَنْهُ
maa qiil-a wa-maa sa-yu-qaal-u ʿan-hu
 what has been said and what will be
 said about it

2.2.1.6 DEFECTIVE ROOTS: *yu-f^{aa}* يَفْعَى

وكاد الموضوع يُمَحَى.

wa-kaad-a l-mawDuu^c-u yu-mHaa.

The topic was almost erased.

2.2.2 Derived forms of the verb in the present tense passive

Following are examples of the present passive in derived forms of the verb. Note that certain forms (V, VI, VII, VIII, IX) occur less frequently in the inflectional passive because they are intransitive or have passive or mediopassive meaning.⁹

2.2.2.1 FORM II: *yu-fa^{al}-u* يُفَعَّلُ; DEFECTIVE: *yu-fa^{aa}* يَفْعَى

أَسْعَارًا لَا تُصَدَّقُ

ʔas^{aa}ar-un laa tu-Saddaq-u

unbelievable ('not believed') prices

لَمْ يُكَلَّلْ بِالنَّجَاحِ.

lam yu-kallal bi-l-najaaH-i.

It was not crowned with success.

يُسَمَّى أَحْمَدُ.

yu-sammaa ʔaHmad-u.

He is called/named Ahmad.

2.2.2.2 FORM III: *yu-faa^{al}-u* يُفَاعَلُ: rare.

2.2.2.3 FORM IV: *yu-f^{al}-u* يُفَعَّلُ; HOLLOW: *yu-faal-u* يُفَالُ; DEFECTIVE: *yu-f^{aa}* يَفْعَى

سَيُعَلَّنُ غَدًا.

sa-yu-^{al}an-u ghad-an.

It will be announced tomorrow.

تُجْرَى مُحَادَثَاتٌ مُهِمَّةٌ.

tu-jraa muHaadathaat-un muhimmat-un.

Important talks are being conducted.

يُضَافُ إِلَيْهَا عِشْرُونَ بِالنِّسْبَةِ ضَرِيبَةُ حُكُومِيَّةٍ.

yu-Daaf-u ʔilay-haa ʔishruuna bi-l-miʔat-i Dariibat-an Hukuumiyyat-an.

Added to it is twenty percent government tax.

2.2.2.4 FORM V: *yu-tafa^{al}-u* يُتَفَعَّلُ: rare.

2.2.2.5 FORM VI: *yu-faa^{al}-u* يُفَاعَلُ: rare.

2.2.2.6 FORM VII: *yu-nfa^{al}-u* يُنْفَعَلُ: rare.

⁹ See section 3.

2.2.2.7 FORM VIII: *yu-ftaʿal-u* يُفْتَعَلُ; HOLLOW: *yu-ftaal-u* يُفْتَالُ; DEFECTIVE: *yu-ftaʿaa* يَفْتَعَى

يُعتَبَرُ من أشهر الرسّامين في العصر الحديث.

yu-ʿtabar-u min ʾashhar-i l-rassaam-iina fii l-ʿaSr-i l-Hadiith-i.

He is considered one of the most famous artists of the modern era.

فكان الخليفة يُنْتَخَبُ في المسجد.

fa-kaan-a l-xaliifat-u yu-ntaxab-u fii l-masjid-i.

The Caliph used to be elected at the mosque.

يُنْتَظَرُ أن تعلن الحكومة...

yu-ntaZar-u ʾan tu-ʿlin-a l-Hukuumat-u . . .

it is expected that the government will announce . . .

2.2.2.8 FORM IX: none.

2.2.2.9 FORM X: *yu-stafʿal-u* يُسْتَفْعَلُ; HOLLOW: *yu-stafaal-u* يُسْتَفَالُ; DEFECTIVE: *yu-stafʿaa* يَسْتَفْعَى

تُسْتَخْدَمُ لصنع الأوراق.

tu-staxdam-u li-Sanaaʿ-i l-ʾawraaq-i.

It is used to make papers.

2.2.3 Quadriliteral present tense passive

Form I: *yu-faʿlal-u* يُفَعَّلُ

The passive of quadriliterals occurs most often in Form I.

الكتب التي لم تُفهرَسْ

al-kutub-u llatii lam tu-fahras

the books which have not been
indexed

الكتب التي تُترجمُ

al-kutub-u llatii tu-tarjam-u

the books which are being translated

2.3 Passive with verb-preposition idioms

When a concept is conveyed by a verb-preposition idiom, the **verb remains in the third person masculine singular in the passive**. It does not inflect for agreement in number or gender. If a passive participle is used, it also remains in the masculine singular. In the following illustrations, an active sentence using a verb-preposition idiom is changed to passive.

Verb-preposition idiom: *baHath-a* 'an عَنْ 'baḥṭ 'to search for, to look for'

Active:

بَحَثْنَا عَنْ الْأَوْلَادِ.

baHath-naa 'an-i l-ʔawlaad-i.

We looked for the children.

بَحَثْنَا عَنِ الْمَقَالَةِ.

baHath-naa 'an-i l-maqaalat-i.

We looked for the article.

Passive:

بُحِثَ عَنِ الْأَوْلَادِ.

buHith-a 'an-i l-ʔawlaad-i.

The children were looked for.

بُحِثَ عَنِ الْمَقَالَةِ.

buHith-a 'an-i l-maqaalat-i.

The article was looked for.

Further examples:

حُكِمَ عَلَى الرِّجَالِ بِالْحَبْسِ لِمُدَّةٍ مِئَةِ يَوْمٍ.

Hukim-a 'alaa l-rijaal-i bi-l-Habs-i li-muddat-i mi'at-i yawm-in.

The men were sentenced to imprisonment for 100 days.

مِنْ مَصَادِرَ مُوثِقٍ بِهَا

min maSaadir-a mawthuuq-in bi-haa

from trusted sources

أَلْوَا حُ طِينِيَّةٌ عُثِرَ عَلَيْهَا فِي الْهَلَالِ الْخَصِيبِ

'alwaaH-un Tiiniyyat-un 'uthir-a 'alay-haa fii l-hilaal-i l-xaSiib-i

clay tablets discovered in the Fertile Crescent

2.4 Passive with doubly transitive verbs

With verbs that are doubly transitive, taking two objects, only one of the objects switches to be the subject of the passive sentence. The other remains in the accusative case:

لَأَنَّهُ يُعْتَبَرُ انْتِقَالًا نَوْعِيًّا بَيْنَ النَّصْرِ وَالْهَزِيمَةِ.

li-'anna-hu yu-'tabar-u ntiqaal-an naw'iyi-an bayn-a l-naSr-i wa-l-haziimat-i.

Because it is considered a characteristic transition between victory and defeat.

يُعْتَبَرُ أَحَدَ أَرْوَاعِ الْآثَارِ الْفَنِيَّةِ.

yu-'tabar-u 'aHad-a 'arwa'-i l-ʔaathaar-i l-fanniyyat-i.

It is considered one of the most splendid artifacts.

عُيِّنَ طَبِيبًا لِلْمَلِكِ.

'uyyin-a Tabiib-an li-l-malik-i.

He was appointed physician to the king.

أُودِعُوا السِّجْنَ.

'uudi'-uu l-sijn-a.

They were thrown [into] prison.

2.5 Mention of agent: *‘alaa yad-i* عَلَى يَدِ, *min qibal-i* مِنْ قِبَلِ

Rarely, an agent or doer of the action may be mentioned in an Arabic passive sentence. When this is the case, certain phrases tend to be used, just as English would use the term “by.” These are *‘alaa yad-i* عَلَى يَدِ + noun ‘by the hand of’ or *min qibal-i* مِنْ قِبَلِ + noun ‘on the part of.’

لكن هذه المساجد محتلة من قِبَلِ المسلمين.

laakinna haadhihi l-masaajid-a muHtallat-un min qibal-i l-muslim-iina.

But these mosques are occupied by Muslims.

أُغْتِيلَ عَلَى يَدِ عِلْمَانِيَيْنِ.

ughthiil-a ‘alaa yad-i ‘almaaniyy-iina.

He was assassinated by laymen.

حَتَّى فَتَحَهَا عَلَى يَدِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

Hattaa fatH-i-haa ‘alaa yad-i l-muslim-iina

until it was conquered (‘its conquering’) by the Muslims

2.5.1 *bi-qalam-i* بِقَلَمِ

With authors of books, the phrase *bi-qalam-i* + noun ‘by the pen of’ is often used instead of ‘by’:

بقلم العالم والشاعر المعروف

bi-qalam-i l-‘aalim-i wa-l-shaa‘ir-i l-ma‘ruuf-i

by the famous scholar and poet

2.6 Passive with potential meaning

The Arabic passive is sometimes used to indicate possibility, worth, or potential. The passive participle in particular may have a meaning equivalent to an English adjective ending in “-able.”

فَلَمْ يَكُنْ لِلْمَعَارِضَةِ وَجُودٌ يُذَكَّرُ.

fa-lam ya-kun li-l-mu‘aaraDat-i wujuud-un yu-dhkar-u.

The opposition did not have a presence [worth] mentioning.

المأكولات

al-ma‘kuulaat-u

edibles, foods

المشروبات

al-mashruubaat-u

refreshments (‘drinkables’)

3 Passive with derived forms of the verb

Derived forms of the verb, especially V, VII, VIII, and IX may indicate a passive or passive-like meaning, and may sometimes be used in this way. However, this is not always the case. These derivational verbs need to be learned as separate lexical

items in order to know if their meaning is equivalent to a passive expression in English. For more detailed analysis of these verb forms, see the separate chapters on each derivational form.

3.1 The Form V verb: *tafa^cal-a / ya-tafa^cal-u* تَفَعَّلَ / يَتَفَعَّلُ

Form V verbs may function as the reflexive of the Form II verb. This is sometimes referred to by grammarians as “mediopassive.”¹⁰ Form V may also be resultative of Form II, showing the result of the Form II action, e.g., *kassar-tu-haa fa-takassar-at* كَسَرْتُهَا فَتَكَسَّرَتْ ‘I broke it (Form II) and it broke (Form V).’¹¹

to disintegrate, break apart	<i>tafakkak-a/ya-tafakkak-u</i>	تَفَكَّكَ / يَتَفَكَّكَ
be fragmented	<i>tamazzaq-a/ya-tamazzaq-u</i>	تَمَزَّقَ / يَتَمَزَّقُ

3.2 The Form VII verb: *infa^cal-a/ya-nfa^cil-u* اِنْفَعَلَ / يَنْفَعَلُ

The Form VII verb may be analyzed as **ergative**, that is, the subject of the Form VII verb is the same as the object of the transitive Form I verb.¹² Form VII verbs are also referred to as reflexive, resultative, passive or mediopassive in meaning. In Arabic they are described as *muTaawi^c* ‘obeying, corresponding with’ – that is, Form VII verbs show the result of Form I action.¹³

اِنْقَطَعَ التَّيَّارُ الْكَهْرِبَائِيّ.	اِنْعَقَدَ الْاِجْتِمَاعُ اَمْسَ.
<i>inqaTa^c-a l-tayyaar-u l-kahrabaa³iyy-u.</i>	<i>in^caqad-a l-ijtimaa^c-u ³ams-i</i>
The electric current was cut off.	The meeting was held yesterday.

تَنَقَّسِمُ الْبِلَادُ إِلَى خَمْسِ عَشْرَةِ مَنطَقَةٍ.
ta-nqasim-u l-bilaad-u ³ilaa xams-a ^cashrat-a minTaqaat-an.
 The country is divided into fifteen regions.

3.3 Form VIII

Form VIII may also have mediopassive meaning.¹⁴ Some examples include:

be spread out	<i>intashar-a/ya-ntashir-u</i>	اِنْتَشَرَ / يَنْتَشِرُ
to be related, linked	<i>intasab-a/ya-ntasib-u</i>	اِنْتَسَبَ / يَنْتَسِبُ

¹⁰ “No grammatical distinction is made in Arabic verbs between “reflexive” acts and spontaneous developments – what one does to one’s self and what simply happens to one are equally accommodated by the mediopassive” (Cowell 1964, 238).

¹¹ For more on the Form V verb and its meanings, see Chapter 26.

¹² Ergative verbs are sometimes referred to as “unaccusative” verbs, especially in relational grammar. See Crystal 1997, 138–39 and Mahmoud 1991.

¹³ For more on *muTaawi^c* see section 1.1 in this chapter and also Chapter 26, note 4.

¹⁴ One reason for the existence of mediopassive verbs in Form VIII is the phonological restriction in Form VII against lexical roots beginning with the consonants *hamza*, *waaw*, *yaa³*, *raa³*, *laam*, or *nuun*. Form VIII or Form V take over the mediopassive function for those roots.

to rise, be raised	<i>irtafa[°]-a/ya-rtafi[°]-u</i>	ارْتَفَعَ / يَرْتَفَعُ
to be healed	<i>ilta[°]am-a/ya-lta[°]im-u</i>	التَّامَّ / يَلْتَمُّ
to be completed	<i>iktamal-a/ya-ktamil-u</i>	اِكْتَمَلَ / يَكْتَمِلُ

إِصْلَاحَاتٌ لَمْ تَكْتَمَلْ مِنْذَ عَامَيْنِ

[°]iSlaaHaat-un lam *ta-ktamil* mundh-u [°]aam-ayni

renovations that **haven't been completed** in two years

جُرُوحٌ لَمْ تَلْتَمَّ بَعْدَ

juruuH-un lam *ta-lta[°]im* ba[°]d-u

wounds that **have not been healed** yet

Conditional and optative expressions

Conditional propositions are ones in which hypothetical conditions are specified in order for something else to take place. Usually there are two clauses, one that specifies the condition (typically starting with “if . . .”) and one that specifies the consequences or result of those conditions (typically starting with “then . . .”). In traditional English grammar the clause that specifies the conditions (the “if-clause”) is termed the **protasis** and the second clause (the “then-clause”) is termed the **apodosis**. In Arabic the equivalent terms are *sharT* شرط (for the condition clause) and *jawaab* جواب (for the consequence clause).

Arabic often uses a **past tense verb in the conditional clause or protasis** (*sharT* شرط). However, the **jussive mood** of the present tense verb may also be used in the protasis. The apodosis or consequence clause (*jawaab* جواب) may be in the same tense as the previous one, or it may be different. If there is a tense switch between clauses, the particle *fa-* normally precedes the apodosis; in practice in current MSA, however, it is often omitted.¹

Some conditions are reasonably realizable (“If you wait, I’ll go with you”), but others are simply expressions of impossible or “contrary to fact” conditions (“If I were your fairy godmother, I would grant your wish”). Arabic uses **different particles** to express possible conditions and impossible conditions.²

1 Possible conditions: *idhaa* إذا and *in* إن

To express possible conditions, Arabic uses two conditional particles: *idhaa* or *in* to start the protasis or *sharT* conditional clause. In the texts covered for this study, *idhaa* occurred much more frequently than *in*.³ The use of *idhaa* is considered to imply probable conditions.⁴

¹ See Taha 1995, 180–82 on this topic.

² For a book-length description of conditional structures in Arabic, see Peled 1992, which contains an extensive bibliography on the topic as well. See also Cantarino 1975, III: 311–69, Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 450–68, and Fischer 2002, 227–36 for discussion of conditional structures in classical and literary Arabic.

³ Note that *idhaa* does not always translate as ‘if.’ Sometimes it is used in the adverbial sense of ‘when.’ See Cantarino 1975, III:297–302.

⁴ “*in* is a straight hypothesis – ‘if, if it is the case that . . . , if it should be that . . .’ while *idhaa* ‘if’ implies some degree of probability and sometimes implies ‘when, whenever.’” Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2:176.

1.1 *ʾidhaa* إذا 'if' + past tense

When *ʾidhaa* is used as the conditional particle in the *sharT* clause, the verb is in the past tense. In the *jawaab*, a tense switch may or may not happen. This type of conditional is the most frequent in MSA.

إذا كنتَ في الطوابق العلوية، لا تهرع إلى الأسفل.
ʾidhaa kun-ta fii l-Tawaabiḳ-i l-ʿulawīyyat-i, laa ta-hraʿ ʾilaa l-ʾasfal-i.
 If you are on the upper floors, do not rush to the lower [floors].

إذا كانت الشبّابيك مفتوحة، سارع إلى إغلاقها.
ʾidhaa kaan-at-i l-shabaabiḳ-u maftuuḤat-an, saariʿ ʾilaa ʾighlaaq-i-haa.
 If the windows are open, hasten to close them.

إذا رغبتَ في حجز تذكرة، فعليك أن تدفع مسبقاً.
ʾidhaa raghib-ta fii Ḥajz-i tadhkarat-in, fa-ʿalay-ka ʾan ta-dfaʿ-a musabbaq-an.
 If you want to reserve a ticket, (then) you must pay in advance.

1.1.1 Negative conditional: *ʾidhaa lam* إذا لم

A negative condition may be expressed with *lam* + jussive verb.

إذا لم يبلغ القانون... فإنه يتجاهله.
idhaa lam ya-lghī l-qaanuun-a . . . fa-ʾinna-hu ya-tajaahal-u-hu.
 [Even] if he hasn't abolished the law . . . he ignores it.

1.1.2 Negative conditional *wa-ʾillaa* . . . *fa-* 'if not; or else'

Another type of negative condition is expressed through the used of *wa-ʾillaa* (a contraction of *wa-ʾin-laa*), which introduces a consequence clause. Sometimes it is accompanied by *fa-* :

وإلا، فستكون فشلت في دورها
wa-ʾillaa, fa-sa-ta-kuun-u fashal-at fii dawr-i-haa
 and if not, it will have failed in its role

كل الخضّر وإلا قاصصوك.
kul-i l-xuḌar-a wa-ʾillaa qaaSaS-uu-ka.
 Eat the vegetables or else they [will] punish you.

1.1.3 Reversal of clause order

Most of the time, the *sharT* clause comes first, before the *jawaab* or apodosis, but sometimes the order is reversed. This is referred to as a "postposed condition," and the normal rules for the result clause do not apply. The particle *fa-* is omitted and the verb in the first clause may vary as to tense.

كان الفريق سيفوز إذا كانت اللجنة قد سمحت لهم بالتسابق.

kaan-a l-fariiq-u sa-ya-fuuz-u 'idhaa kaan-at-i l-lajnat-u qad samaH-at la-hum bi-l-tasaabuq-i.

The team would have won **if** the committee **had permitted** them to participate.

1.2 Conditional with *'in* + perfect or *'in* + jussive

The conditional particle *'in* may be followed by either verbs in the perfect or verbs in the jussive in both the condition and the result clauses. If the jussive is used in the conditional clause, then the verb in the result clause may also be jussive.⁵ For this reason, the particle *'in* is called in Arabic grammar one of the “particles that require the jussive on two verbs”: *al-'adawaat-u llatii ta-jzim-u fi'l-ayni* الأدوات التي تجزم فعلين *fi'l-ayni*. If, however, the verb in the result clause is part of a nominal clause (i.e., a clause that starts with a noun), then it is in the imperfect indicative.⁶ The verb in the result clause may also be in the past tense.

The use of *'in* with conditional clauses is less frequent in Modern Standard Arabic than in literary and classical Arabic.

سيمرضون إن أكلوا كل هذا الآن.

sa-ya-mraD-uuna 'in 'akal-uu kull haadhaa l-'aan-a.

They will get sick **if** they eat all that now.

إن زرتموني أكرمتكم.

*'in zur-tum-uu-nii 'akram-tu-kum.*⁷

If you (pl.) visit me I shall honor you.

إن شاء الله.

'in shaa'-a llaah-u.

If God wills.

⁵ See Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2:178: “If the verb in the condition clause is jussive, the verb in the result clause must also be jussive.” See also ‘Abd al-Latif et al., 1997, 307ff. for more examples. But note that in Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 291, they list under possibilities for the conditional sentence: “The Jussive is used in the Protasis, the Perfect in the Apodosis:

إن يذهب زيدُ ذهبْتُ معه.

'in ya-dhhab zayd-un dhahab-tu ma'-a-hu.

‘If Zayd goes I will go.’ (their example)

The condition clause may also be in the imperative, without a conditional particle, and followed immediately by a verb in the jussive in the result clause. Abboud and McCarus 1983 give the following example (Part 2:178):

ادرس تنجح.

u-drus ta-njaH.

Study [and] you [will] succeed.

⁶ See Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 162.

⁷ From Abboud & McCarus 1983, Part 2:182.

إن يكسر إنسان سنَّ آخر، فسِنَّه تُكسر.

*ʾin ya-ksir ʾinsaan-un sinn-a ʾaaxar-a, fa-sinn-u-hu tu-ksar-u.*⁸

If a person **breaks** the tooth of another, (then) his tooth **shall be broken**.

إن تنتظرني في المطار وقت وصولي، عدتُ ذلك كرمًا منك.

*ʾin ta-ntaZir-nii fii l-maTaar-i waqt-a wuSuul-ii, ʿadad-tu dhaalika karam-an min-ka.*⁹

If you would wait for me at the airport at the time of my arrival, I would consider that a kindness from you.

1.2.1 *wa-ʾin* وإن 'although; even though'

وإن كانت بدايته تأخرت إلا أنها جاءت.

wa-ʾin kaan-at bidaayat-u-hu taʾaxxar-at ʾillaa ʾanna-haa jaaʾ-at.

Although his start was late, nevertheless it came.

حقَّق الحلم في ميدالية وإن كانت برونزية.

Haqqaq-a l-Hulm-a fii miidaaliyyat-in wa-ʾin kaan-at biruunziyyat-an.

He realized the dream of a medal **although** it was bronze.

2 Conditional expressed with *-maa* ما 'ever'

The adverbial suffix *-maa* can be suffixed to an adverb or a noun to shift its meaning to 'ever,' such as "whenever" or "wherever." These expressions are considered conditionals in Arabic and follow the rules for conditional sentences. Cowell 1964 refers to clauses using these particles as "quasi-conditional" clauses.¹⁰

2.1 *mahmaa* مَهْمَا 'whatever'

لا أعتقد أنها ستتوقَّف، مهما قالت الولايات المتحدة.

laa ʾa-ʿtaqid-u ʾanna-haa sa-ta-tawaqqaf-u, mahmaa qaal-at-i l-wilaayaat-u l-muttaHidat-u.

I don't think it will stop, **whatever** the United States says.

2.2 *ʾayn-a-maa* أَيْنَمَا 'wherever'

أينما كنتَ، يمكنك أن تستمع.

ʾayn-a-maa kun-ta, yu-mkin-u-ka ʾan ta-stamiʿ-a.

Wherever you are, you can listen.

⁸ From Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 160.

⁹ Ibid., 164.

¹⁰ Cowell 1964, 337–38. Cowell is describing types of conditional clauses in Syrian Arabic but deals with similar particles.

2.3 *kull-a-maa* كَلَّمَا 'whenever'

This connective also specifies a condition and therefore requires the use of the past tense verb in the clause that it introduces.

يمكن تكرارها كلما تجدد الخطر.
yu-mkin-u takraar-u-haa kull-a-maa tajaddad-a l-xaTar-u.

It can be repeated **whenever** danger recurs.

2.4 *'idhaa + maa* إِذَا مَا 'if ever'

Occasionally, even *'idhaa* will be followed by the particle *-maa*. In this sense, *-maa* is **not used as a negative particle** but implies 'if ever' or 'if and when.'

إذا ما فُتِحَ باب الحوار
'idhaa-maa futiH-a baab-u l-Hiwaar-i
 if the door of discussion is **ever** opened

2.5 *man* مَنْ 'whoever'

The pronoun *man*, meaning 'who' or 'whoever' may be followed by a conditional clause in the jussive. This kind of conditional is often found in proverbs.

من يزرع شوكاً يحصد شوكاً.
*man ya-zra^c shawk-an ya-HSid shawk-an.*¹¹
 He who sows thorns [will] reap thorns.

من يقتل يُقتل.
*man ya-qtul yu-qtal.*¹²
 He who kills, shall be killed.

3. Contrary-to-fact conditionals: *la-* لَوْ *law*

Some conditional sentences express impossible or unreasonable conditions. The conditional particle used to introduce contrary-to-fact conditions is *law* لَوْ, followed by either a past tense verb or *lam* plus the jussive for the negative. The contrary-to-fact condition is usually followed by a result clause (*jawaab*) that is preceded by the particle *la-* لَـ; there are some exceptions, however. The *la-* لَـ is omitted when the result clause precedes the condition clause as in:

عنزة ولو طارت.
'anzat-un wa-law Taar-at.
 It is [still] a goat **even if** it flies.¹³

¹¹ Cited in 'Abd al-Latif et. al., 1997, 308.

¹² From Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 160.

¹³ This Arabic saying is cited in McLaughlin 1988, 82.

اطلبوا العلم ولو في الصين.

uTlub-uu l-ilm-a wa-law fii l-Siin.

Seek knowledge **even** if it be in China.

or if the result clause is understood or implied, and therefore not specified:

لو سمحت.

law samaH-ta.

If you permit.

حتى ولو *Hattaa law* and *Hattaa wa-law* 3.1 'even if' لو

The addition of *Hattaa* to *law*, yields the meaning of 'even if.' It is usually followed by a past tense verb or negated past tense through the use of *lam* plus the jussive.

حتى ولو عثرت الحكومة على وسائل أخرى

Hattaa wa-law athar-at-i l-Hukuumat-u alaa wasaa'il-a uxraa

even if the government discovers other means

حتى لو لم نعترف بذلك

Hattaa law lam na-tarif bi-dhaalika

even if we don't acknowledge that

4 Optative constructions

Wishes, blessings, and curses are often expressed in the past tense in Arabic, just as the past tense is used in many hypothetical expressions. There is no need for a particular particle, just the expression phrased in the past tense.

بارك الله فيك.

baarak-a llaah-u fii-ka.

May God **ble**ss you.

حفظه الله.

Hafiz-a-hu llaah-u.

May God **pre**serve him.

رحمه الله.

raHam-a-hu llaah-u.

May God **have** mercy on him.

أيدك الله.

ayyad-a-ka llaah-u.

May God **help** you.

عاش الملك!

aash-a l-malik-u!

[Long] **live** the king!

طال عمرك.

Taal-a umr-u-ka.

May you **live long**.

('May [God] **lengthen** your life.')

4.1 Optatives in the present tense

The past tense is not always used in optatives. Some of them are in the **present tense**:

الله يسلّمك.

allaah-u yu-sallim-u-ka.

May God **keep** you safe.

يحيى الملك!

ya-Hyaa l-malik-u!

[Long] **live** the king!

السلام عليكم.

al-salaam-u alay-kum.

Peace be upon you.

Appendix I: How to use an Arabic dictionary

Using an Arabic dictionary

The organization of Arabic dictionaries is based on word roots and not word spelling. Word roots are listed alphabetically according to the order of letters in the Arabic alphabet. For example, the root *k-t-f* comes after *k-t-b* because */f/* comes after */b/* in the Arabic alphabet. Therefore, in order to find the root, one has to know the order of the alphabet. This system applies to genuinely Arabic words or words that have been thoroughly Arabized.

Loanwords, however, — words borrowed from other languages — are listed in an Arabic dictionary according to their spelling (e.g., *haliikubtar* هلييكبتر ‘helicopter’).

Instead of relying on the exact orthography of a word, therefore, Arabic dictionaries are organized by the root or consonant core of a word, providing under that initial entry every word derived from that particular root. The root is therefore often called a “lexical root” because it is the actual foundation for the lexicon, or dictionary. The lexical root provides a semantic field within which actual vocabulary items can be located. In this respect, an Arabic dictionary might be seen as closer to a thesaurus than a dictionary, locating all possible variations of meaning in one referential domain or semantic field under one entry.

Most often, Arabic words can be reduced to three radicals or root consonants (e.g., *H-m-l* ‘carry’), but some roots have more or less than three. There are a number of biliteral (*y-d* ‘hand’), quadriliteral (*t-r-j-m* ‘translate’), and quinquiliteral (*b-n-f-s-j* ‘violet’) roots in Arabic, and there are even some monoliteral roots (for function words such as the preposition *ka-* ‘as, like’).

The verb citation form for dictionary use is **the third person masculine singular past tense**. There is no infinitive form of the verb in Arabic.

For example, all the following words having to do with “studying” are found in the dictionary under the root *d-r-s*, even though some begin with *ma-* or *mu-*, because all of them are located within the semantic field of *d-r-s*.

lesson	<i>dars</i>	درس
lessons	<i>duruus</i>	دروس

school	<i>madrassa</i>	مدرسة
teacher	<i>mudarris</i>	مُدَرِّس
studying	<i>diraasa</i>	دراسة
he studied	<i>daras-a</i>	دَرَسَ (the citation form)

Because of this major difference in dictionary organization, it is necessary for Western learners of Arabic to learn rules of Arabic word structure in order to be able to make sense of an Arabic or Arabic–English dictionary. Learners must be able to identify the root consonants in a word in order to find the main dictionary entry; then they need to know generally how the word pattern fits into the overall system of derivational morphology in order to locate that particular word within the abundant and sometimes extensive subcategories provided within the semantic field of the entry. The root-pattern system is fundamental for Arabic word creation and accounts for about 80–85 percent of Arabic vocabulary.

Using the Wehr Dictionary

In the most widely used Arabic–English dictionary, the *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (DMWA) by Hans Wehr and edited by J. Milton Cowan, fourth edition (1979), the compilers assume that the users know and understand the system of Arabic derivational verb morphology based on the roman numerals I–X (or sometimes even up to XV). Wehr lists verbs first, in the I–X order, marked **only by the roman numeral**, not giving the actual verb spelling except for Form I.¹

For example, under the root *q-b-l*, are listed roman numerals II, III, IV, V, VI, VIII, and X, and after each roman numeral are definitions for each of these forms of the verb. Thus, if the user is looking up an inflected verb form, such as *istaqbal-at*, the user needs to know that this is a Form X verb, that the root is *q-b-l*, and that it is inflected for third person feminine singular past tense. In this manner, the user can locate the verb root, find the roman numeral X and see that the listed definitions for this form include ‘to face, to meet, to receive.’ By putting together the lexical meaning from the dictionary information, contextual meaning from the text being read, and the grammatical meaning from the inflectional suffix, the user can deduce that the word *istaqbal-at* means ‘she received.’

Note that the DMWA provides the present tense or imperfective stem vowel for Form I because it is not predictable. It does not do this for the derived forms, because they are predictable. It therefore includes, in romanization, after the Arabic script, under the entry for *k-t-b*, for example:

kataba *u* (*kath, kitba, kitaaba*)

¹ Wehr provides a useful summary of the arrangement of entries in his introduction (1979, pp. vii–xvii).

That is, it gives the vowelizing for the past tense citation form, the present tense stem vowel, and, in parentheses, the most common verbal nouns for the Form I verb, all in romanization. The *DMWA* does not include short vowels in the Arabic script spelling of the entries; short vowels are indicated only by the romanization that directly follows the dictionary entry.

To look up the word *istiqbaal* استقبال, it is helpful to know that it is a verbal noun of Form X, since the *DMWA* lists nouns (including nouns of place and nouns of instrument, for example), adjectives, adverbs, and verbal nouns immediately after the verb definitions, in the I-X order. After that are listed active participles I-X and then passive participles, also in the I-X order. Note, however, that the *DMWA* does not identify the nouns or participles by number; it assumes that the user knows the derivational system.

It is also important for users to be able to recognize noun, adjective, and participle plurals because plurals are not listed as separate items in the dictionary, even though their word structure may differ substantially from the singular form, especially with broken plurals. Thus, coming across a word such as *mashaakil* مشاكل, the reader needs to know how to determine the root, *sh-k-l*, but also needs to recognize that this is a broken plural pattern, and will not be listed as a separate entry, but as a plural under the entry of *mushkila* مشكلة, 'problem' (a Form IV active participle).

Particular challenges emerge when lexical roots are weak or irregular in some way, that is, if they are geminate, hamzated, assimilated, hollow, defective, or doubly defective. In these cases, the nature of a root consonant may shift (from a long vowel to a *hamza*, for example as in the word *zaa'ir* زائر 'visitor' derived from the root *z-w-r*) or a root consonant may simply disappear (for example, the noun *thiqa* 'trust, confidence' from the root *w-th-q*). It is therefore crucial for learners to practice using the dictionary and to gain an understanding of the system of Arabic word structure in order to have quick and efficient access to vocabulary items. Having a knowledge of the basic derivational systems and the logic and rules within these systems is key to building vocabulary and to gaining access to the full range of the abundant Arabic lexicon.

Naturally, it is not possible for learners at the early stages to recognize all possible root variants, but understanding the logic of dictionary organization will help right from the beginning. While it is possible to simply scour all the entries under a particular root without knowing the I-X system or the part-of-speech information that tells one where to look, it takes a great deal more time, and can be very frustrating, if not defeating.

This reference grammar includes extensive analysis of the permutations of regular and irregular lexical roots, in the I-X system. Please consult these sections for analysis of word structure, paradigms, and examples of words in context.

Thus, to summarize, the *DMWA* lists entries for a lexical root in the following order:

1. the root (which resembles the third person masculine singular past tense Form I verb)
2. verbal nouns of Form I (listed directly after the root in romanization)
3. verbs I–X listed numerically by roman numeral only
4. nouns and other parts of speech derived from Form I
5. nouns derived from other forms of the verb (in II–X sequence)
6. active participles from Forms I–X
7. passive participles from Forms I–X

Using an Arabic–Arabic dictionary

Arabic–Arabic dictionaries are likewise organized by lexical roots and the roots are listed in alphabetical order. Note, however, that Arabic lexicons do not use the I–X roman numeral system and make no reference to it.

For example, a standard reference work in Arabic is *al-Munjid fii l-lugha wa-l-ʿaʿlaam*, a combination of dictionary and concise encyclopedia. In the dictionary part, it lists verb derivations in the I–X order by listing them as they are spelled.

It also introduces verbal nouns, especially of Form I, in context, used in a short sentence, for example:

كَتَبَ كَتَبًا وَكَتَبَةً وَكَتَابَةَ الْكِتَابِ

katab-a katb-an wa-kitaab-an wa-kitbat-an wa-kitaabat-an-i l-kitaab-a.

Literally: ‘He wrote **writing and writing and writing and writing** the book.’

It is standard practice in Arabic reference works to use the verbal noun/s in a sentence with the verb in order to illustrate what they are (even though the example might not make logical sense). In the above example, there are four different verbal nouns displayed in boldface type.

This procedure is used with Form I verbs, but the verbal nouns of the derived forms II–X are not separately indicated because they are predictable. The *al-Munjid fii l-lugha wa-l-ʿaʿlaam* has an excellent introductory section summarizing Arabic derivational and inflectional morphology (pp. *haaʿ* to *faaʿ*).

Arabic dictionary structure has evolved over time, and some older dictionaries are organized in different ways.² Note also that some modern Arabic dictionaries are referred to as “*ʿabjadiyy*” or ‘alphabetical,’ meaning that their

² See Haywood 1965 for a history of Arabic lexicography. See also Shvitiel 1993 for a comparison of Arabic root dictionaries and alphabetical dictionaries.

entries are organized by word spelling (for example, *al-Munjid al-'abjadiyy*, 1968). Although this type of organization eases use somewhat for those who do not understand the derivational system of Arabic word structure, it is much less useful in helping the learner grasp semantic fields, word structure patterns, and meaning relationships among lexical items.

Appendix II: Glossary of technical terms

1. Glossary of Arabic grammatical terms

These entries are transliterated and organized in English alphabetical order with *‘ayn* and *hamza* discounted as orthographic elements.

<i>‘aamil</i>	syntactic governor or ‘operator’
<i>‘abjad; ‘abjadiyya</i>	alphabet
<i>‘af‘aal</i>	verbs (plural of <i>fi‘l</i>)
<i>‘af‘aal al-quluub/</i>	verbs of perception or cognition, in particular,
<i>‘af‘aal qalbiyya</i>	of emotions and intellect
<i>‘af‘aal taHwiil</i>	verbs of transformation (of something from one state to another)
<i>‘amal</i>	syntactic government; regime
<i>‘amr</i>	imperative; command
<i>‘asmaa’</i>	nouns (pl. of <i>ism</i>)
<i>‘asmaa’ al-‘ishaara</i>	demonstrative pronouns
<i>‘axawaat</i>	“sisters” – words similar in class and in governing effect
<i>badal</i>	apposition
<i>Damiir/Damaa’ir</i>	personal pronoun
<i>Damaa’ir munfaSila</i>	independent personal pronouns, subject pronouns
<i>Damma</i>	short vowel /u/
<i>faDla</i>	‘extra’ or ‘surplus’ parts of the sentence rather than the kernel or core of the predication
<i>faa‘il</i>	subject of a verbal sentence; agent; doer of the action
<i>fatHa</i>	short vowel /a/
<i>fi‘l / ‘af‘aal</i>	verb; action

<i>fi'l ʾajwaf</i>	hollow verb
<i>fi'l ghayr mutaʿaddin</i>	intransitive verb
<i>fi'l laazim</i>	intransitive verb
<i>fi'l lafiif mafruuq</i>	assimilated and defective verb
<i>fi'l lafiif maqruun</i>	hollow and defective verb
<i>fi'l mahmuuz</i>	hamzated verb
<i>fi'l mithaal</i>	assimilated verb
<i>fi'l muDaʿʿaf</i>	geminate verb, doubled verb
<i>fi'l mutaʿaddin</i>	transitive verb
<i>fi'l naaqiS</i>	defective verb
<i>fi'l SaHiiH saalim</i>	sound verb; regular verb
<i>fuSHaa</i>	literary Arabic, classical Arabic
<i>Haal</i>	circumstantial accusative
<i>hamzat al-qaTʿ</i>	strong <i>hamza</i>
<i>hamzat al-waSl</i>	elidable <i>hamza</i>
<i>Haraka/-aat</i>	short vowel
<i>Harf / Huruuf</i>	letter (of the alphabet); particle, function word
<i>Huruuf qamariyya</i>	“moon” letters; word-initial sounds that do not assimilate the <i>laam</i> of the definite article
<i>Huruuf shamsiyya</i>	“sun” letters; word-initial sounds that assimilate the <i>laam</i> of the definite article
<i>ʾiDaafa</i>	annexation structure, noun construct, genitive construct
<i>ʾiDaafa ghayr Haqiiqiyya</i>	“unreal” <i>ʾiDaafa</i> , adjective <i>ʾiDaafa</i>
<i>ʾiʿraab</i>	desinential (word-final) inflection
<i>ishtiqaaq</i>	derivational etymology
<i>ism / ʾasmaaʾ</i>	noun; name
<i>ism al-faaʿil</i>	active participle
<i>ism al-ʾishaara</i>	demonstrative pronoun
<i>ism al-mafʿuul</i>	passive participle
<i>ism maqSuur</i>	indeclinable noun
<i>ism mawSuul</i>	relative pronoun
<i>ism al-tafDiil</i>	relative adjective; comparative or superlative
<i>istithnaaʾ</i>	exception, exceptive

<i>jam^c</i>	plural
<i>jam^c mu^oannath saalim</i>	sound feminine plural
<i>jam^c mudhakkar saalim</i>	sound masculine plural
<i>jam^c al-taksiir</i>	broken plural
<i>jarr</i>	genitive case
<i>jazm</i>	jussive mood
<i>jawaab</i>	answer; the apodosis, consequence clause
<i>jumla</i>	sentence
<i>jumla fi^cliyya</i>	verbal sentence
<i>jumla ismiyya</i>	equational sentence; noun-initial sentence
<i>kasra</i>	short vowel /i/
<i>laa nafy-i l-jins-i</i>	the <i>laa</i> of absolute or categorical negation
<i>laam al-^oamr</i>	permissive or hortative imperative
<i>maa l-ta^cajjub</i>	the <i>maa</i> of astonishment
<i>maaDii</i>	past, past tense; perfective aspect
<i>madda/ ^oalif madda</i>	<i>hamza</i> followed by a long /aa/; the symbol that indicates this sound (ّ)
<i>maf^cuul bi-hi</i>	direct object of transitive verb; the accusative of direct object
<i>maf^cuul fii-hi</i>	accusative adverb of time, manner, or place
<i>maf^cuul li-^oajl-i-hi / maf^cuul la-hu</i>	accusative of purpose
<i>maf^cuul muTlaq</i>	cognate accusative
<i>majhuul</i>	the passive voice
<i>mamnuu^c min-a l-Sarf</i>	diptote
<i>majruur</i>	genitive
<i>manSuub</i>	accusative/subjunctive
<i>manquuS</i>	defective
<i>marfuu^c</i>	nominative/indicative
<i>maSdar</i>	verbal noun
<i>maSdar miimii</i>	a verbal noun whose initial consonant is a prefixed <i>miim</i>
<i>mustaqbal</i>	future tense
<i>maziid</i>	“augmented”; extended verb form (II-X)

<i>muʾannath</i>	feminine
<i>mubtadaʾ</i>	subject of equational sentence
<i>muDaaf</i>	the first term of an <i>ʾiDaafa</i> , or annexation structure
<i>muDaaf ʾilay-hi</i>	the second term of an <i>ʾiDaafa</i> , or annexation structure
<i>muDaari^c</i>	present tense; imperfective aspect
<i>mudhakkar</i>	masculine
<i>mufrad</i>	singular
<i>mujarrad</i>	base form verb; Form I; literally ‘stripped’
<i>mu^crab</i>	triptote; fully inflectable
<i>muTaabaqa</i>	agreement or concord
<i>muTaawa^a</i>	‘obedience; conformity’; verbal noun referring to verbs that are resultative, reflexive, passive, or semi-passive in meaning
<i>muTaawi^c</i>	‘obedient, conforming’ – that is, conforming with a particular, lexically related action; passive, resultative, reflexive, or semi-passive
<i>muthannaa</i>	dual
<i>naaqiS</i>	defective
<i>nafy</i>	negation
<i>naHw</i>	grammar; syntactic theory
<i>naHt</i>	compounding into one word
<i>naaʾib al-faa^cil</i>	subject of a passive verb
<i>naSb</i>	accusative case (on substantives)/subjunctive mood (on verbs)
<i>na^ct</i>	adjective
<i>nawaasix</i>	lexical items that convert substantives to the accusative case
<i>nidaaʾ</i>	vocative
<i>nisba</i>	relative adjective
<i>raf^c</i>	nominative case (on substantives)/indicative mood (on verbs)
<i>rubaa^ciyy</i>	quadriliteral (root)

<i>Sarf</i>	derivational morphology and inflectional morphology that does not include case and mood marking
<i>shadda</i>	symbol that indicates doubling of a consonant (ّ)
<i>sharT</i>	condition; protasis, conditional clause
<i>Sifa</i>	adjective
<i>sukuun</i>	absence of vowel; quiescence, symbolized by a small circle (ْ)
<i>tamyiiz</i>	accusative of specification
<i>tanwiin</i>	nunation; pronunciation of an /n/ sound after the case-marking short vowel on a noun, adjective, or adverb
<i>tarkiib</i>	compounding
<i>tashdiid</i>	doubling of a consonant; the use of <i>shadda</i> (q.v.)
<i>thulaathiyy</i>	triliteral (root)
<i>waaw al-°aTf</i>	conjoining <i>waaw</i> ; conjunction <i>waaw</i>
<i>waSf</i>	descriptive adjective
<i>waSla</i>	symbol used to mark elision of <i>hamza</i>
<i>wazn/ °awzaan</i>	Form/s of the verb (I-X and XI-XV)
<i>xabar</i>	predicate of an equational sentence
<i>xafD</i>	genitive case (see also <i>jarr</i>)
<i>Zarf</i>	adverb generally derived from a triliteral lexical root
<i>Zarf makaan</i>	adverb of place
<i>Zarf zamaan</i>	adverb of time

2. Glossary of English grammatical terms

Many of these brief definitions are elaborated upon in various parts of this book. See the index for page and section references for more extended explanations and examples.

accusative	one of the three cases in Arabic noun and adjective declensions; it typically marks the object of a transitive verb but also serves to mark a wide range of adverbial functions
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affix	an inflectional or derivational feature added to a word stem
agreement	a relationship between words where one word requires a corresponding form in another (e.g., agreement in gender or in case)
allophone	a contextually determined variant of a phoneme
annexation structure	a genitive noun construct; an <i>ʾiDaafa</i>
assimilated	referring to lexical roots, those whose initial phoneme is <i>waaw</i> or <i>yaaʾ</i>
assimilation	a phonological process wherein one sound acquires features of another (usually adjacent) sound
biliteral	having only two root phonemes
case	a form of word-final inflection on nouns and adjectives that shows their relationship to other words in a sentence
clause	a unit of sentence structure that includes a predication
construct phrase	a structure in which two nouns are juxtaposed in a genitive relationship; an annexation structure; an <i>ʾiDaafa</i>
cryptofeminine	a feminine noun not overtly marked for feminine gender
cryptomasculine	a masculine noun not overtly marked for masculine gender
circumfix	a combination of prefix and suffix used with a stem to create a lexical item, such as the English word “enlighten,” or an Arabic verb such as <i>ta-drus-uuna</i> ‘you (m.pl.) study’.
defective	a term applied to lexical roots referring to those with a final <i>waaw</i> or <i>yaaʾ</i>
desinential inflection	word-final marking for syntactically determined case or mood
diptote	a term applied to certain indefinite nouns that do not take either <i>kasra</i> or nunation

elative	refers to the comparative and superlative forms of Arabic adjectives
geminate	a term applied to lexical roots wherein the second and third root consonants are identical
gemination	the process of doubling the length or strength of a consonant
genitive	one of the three cases in Arabic noun and adjective declensions; it typically marks the object of a preposition and also the second noun in the construct phrase
government	a syntactic principle wherein certain words (“governors”) cause others to inflect in particular ways
hamzated	including the consonant <i>hamza</i> (glottal stop) as part of the root morpheme (e.g., ^ʔ <i>k-l</i> , <i>s-ʔ-l</i> or <i>q-r-ʔ</i>)
hollow verb	a verb whose lexical root contains a semi-vowel in the medial position (e.g., <i>q-w-l</i> or <i>S-y-r</i>)
imperative	a mood of the verb expressing command
imperfect (also “imperfective”)	as applied to a verb, denoting an incomplete action or referring in a general way to incomplete, ongoing actions or states
indicative	a mood of the verb that is ungoverned by a syntactic operator (‘ <i>aamil</i> ’); it is characteristic of statements of fact and of questions
infix	an affix inserted into the body of a word stem
intransitive	describes verbs whose action or process involves only the doer
jussive	a mood of the Arabic verb required by certain governing particles (e.g., <i>lam</i>)
morphology	the study of word structure and word formation
morphophonemics	the study of how word structure interacts with phonological rules
nominative	one of the three cases in Arabic noun and adjective declensions; it typically marks the subject of a sentence

nunation	the pronunciation of an /n/ sound after the marker of case inflection; typically it denotes indefiniteness
object	a syntactic term that describes the recipient of an action (the object of a verb, also referred to as a “direct object”), or the noun or pronoun that follows a preposition
optative	expressing wish or desire
participle	a deverbal adjective that may function as a noun
active participle	describes the doer of the action
passive participle	describes the recipient or object of the action
pattern	the morphological framework into which an Arabic lexical root fits in order to form a word
perfect (also “perfective”)	as applied to a verb, denoting a completed action in the past
phoneme	a distinctive language sound that carries a differential function
phonology	the study of the sound system of a language
phonotactics	the study of the rules of sound distribution in a language
phrase	a group of words that forms a syntactic unit but does not include a predication (noun-adjective phrase, prepositional phrase, demonstrative phrase, etc.)
prefix	an affix attached at the beginning of a word stem
quadriliteral	containing four root consonants
quinquiliteral	containing five root consonants
radical	a root consonant
resultative	referring to a verb form expressing the result of an action
root	the most elemental consonant structure of an Arabic word
semi-consonant	a <i>waaw</i> or <i>yaa</i> ’; also referred to as “semi-vowels”; consonants that have some of the properties of vowels or which serve as vowels in certain contexts

sound (adj.)	regular in inflection or structure (<i>see also</i> “strong”)
stem; word stem	the base form of a word without inflections
stem vowel	the vowel that follows the second root consonant in a verb stem
strong (<i>see also</i> “sound”)	regular in inflection or structure
subjunctive	a mood of the Arabic verb typically used after expressions of wishing, desire, hoping, necessity, or other attitudes expressed toward the action of the verb
suffix	an affix attached at the end of a word stem
syntax	the relationship among words in a phrase, clause, or sentence
triliteral	containing three root consonants
triptote	a term applied to nouns meaning that they inflect for all three cases
transitive	describes verbs whose action affects an object (often referred to as “direct object”)
verbal noun (also “deverbal noun”)	a noun derived from a particular verb that describes the action of that verb (e.g., acceptance – <i>qubuul</i> ; departure – <i>mughaadara</i> ; swimming – <i>sibaaHa</i>); Arabic: <i>maSdar</i> or <i>ism fiʿl</i>

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